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FOR A Wonderful WEDDING

DRUGS SCARE: Porthcawl girl (15) rushed to hospital

A PORTHCAWL girl was rushed to hospital last Friday (January 13), after taking a drug that is believed to be ketamine, *writes PHILIP IRWIN.*

Now, Police in Bridgend are reminding young people of the dangers after the 15-year-old girl collapsed in the Porthcawl area after taking the drug.

Ketamine is intended for veterinary use but has become known for its stimulant and psychedelic affects.

The girl was taken to the Princess of Wales Hospital for treatment and is expected to make a full recovery.

A 15-year-old boy from Bridgend was arrested on suspicion of supplying a Class B drug and has been bailed pending further enquiries.

Detective Inspector Richard Weber said: "The girl concerned is lucky that she was given medical attention so quickly, as the consequences of her actions could have been far more serious.

"We cannot stress enough how dangerous ketamine and other controlled drugs are. Those taking drugs can never be sure exactly what they're taking – what chemicals are contained, and what the strength of the drug is – so they are literally gambling with their lives every time.

"While those who achieve the desired effects may feel they are safe to continue taking a substance, they simply never know when they might have an adverse reaction or what long-term damage is being caused to their health.

"No drugs can ever be safe and our message to youngsters is to avoid them at all costs.

"And if the health risks aren't enough to deter them, perhaps knowing the law might. Possessing ketamine can land you in prison for up to five years. Supplying the drug carries a penalty of up to 14 years in prison."

Following the incident, schools liaison officers will be stepping up drug and alcohol awareness sessions at schools in the area.

LIFE-SAVING DEVICE FINDS A HOME – IN A GARAGE!

Pencoed has a new defibrillator, after fundraising efforts by a local business., April Complete care Solutions (ACCS)
At the handover are (left to right): Gerard Rothwell; Yvette Szulc (ACCS); Coun John McCarthy; Eva Richards (ACCS); Vicky Richards (manager at ACCS); Andy Walters (community services operative); Mohammed Ajeer (Texaco garage manager); and Geraint Thomas (PA to Mayor).
SEE THE FULL STORY ON PAGE 9.

£1million spent in one year...
Council denies credit card 'bonanza' claim

by ANDY JOHNSTONE

BRIDGEND County Borough Council (BCBC) used corporate credit cards more than 5,700 times, spending nearly £1 million, in the financial year 2015-2016.

The information emerged following a Freedom of Information (FoI) request from Tim Thomas, Plaid Cymru's Ynysawdre local election candidate, who described it as a "spending bonanza", a charge refuted by BCBC.

A spokesperson for BCBC called use of the Welsh Purchasing Card scheme as "fast and cost-effective" and "entirely appropriate", and called the suggestion by Plaid Cymru that it amounts to a spending bonanza on top of original departmental budgets as "factually incorrect and highly misleading".

The rise to almost £1m in 2015-6 was in contrast to some £545,000 spent on credit cards in the preceding financial year, and a total of almost £2m for the financial years 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 27)

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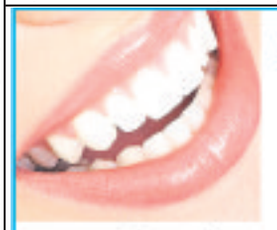

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MP MEETS NEWTON WI

Members of Newton WI with MP Madeleine Moon (sixth from right).

MEMBERS of the Newton WI branch welcomed the Bridgend MP, Madeleine Moon, who gave a talk on the traditions of Parliament.

Some 40 members listened intently to the former social worker talk about the workings of the Houses of Parliament; from the way of addressing other parliamentarians, attracting the attention of the Speaker in the Chamber in order to speak, the essential work of the Select Committees and some of the idiosyncrasies of Parliament.

Ms Moon said: "I was delighted to be invited to speak to Newton WI members, many of whom I knew, about Parliament and was pleased by their desire to know more about the workings of their Parliament

"Following my talk, there were many interesting questions asked about the urgent repairs needed to the Palace of Westminster, my role in the NATO parliamentary assembly, and defence of the realm."

Geothermal energy from old mines could heat Llynfi Valley homes

LLYNFI Valley residents are being invited to find out more about an exciting project which is investigating whether heat could be taken from underground mine water to provide energy for nearly 1,000 homes.

The plan is being developed by Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC), and two public exhibitions will be held next month.

Former mine workings in the valley may potentially offer a geo-thermal source of energy as they have filled up with water which has an average temperature of around 10 to 14 degrees Celsius.

The idea is to pump the water from the old disused mine workings and transport it through a network of pipes to residents' properties in Caerau where the heat will be extracted and passed through a heat pump, which will then provide heat for the property using its existing radiator system. The mine water would not, at any point, enter the homes of residents.

The following public exhibitions have been arranged, and local people are invited to drop in at any time to find out more:

Monday, February 13: Noddfa Chapel Community Centre, Caerau Road, Maesteg, (CF34 0PG), 3pm–8pm; Wednesday, February 15: Caerau Development Trust, Woodland Terrace, Maesteg (CF34 0SR), 11am–4pm.

Coun Ceri Reeves, the council's cabinet member for communities, said: "I am pleased to see that this innovative project is progressing and that Caerau residents will soon be able to learn more about this exciting cutting edge opportunity to develop alternative heat.

"The council has commissioned a detailed ground condition survey to ascertain whether the water held in the mine workings under Caerau provides a natural heat source which could provide safe, continuous, and cost effective heat for a large number of local homes.

"I am watching the development of this renewable energy project with great interest as its potential to make a positive impact in the Llynfi Valley is huge."

In March 2016, BCBC was one of 24 local authorities – and the only one in Wales – to share a grant of £1.5m from the Department of Energy and Climate Change for the development of new low carbon heat networks.

Heat networks are believed to have the potential to supply heat for between 14 per cent and 43 per cent of UK buildings by 2050. The Department of Energy and Climate Change has been providing grant funding and expert guidance to support 190 heat network projects since 2013.

Coun Reeves added: "We're proud to be among those testing the large scale viability of using these low carbon heat sources and developing a model that could be rolled out in the rest of the UK."

As well as being invited to attend the public exhibitions, Caerau residents can also express an interest in helping to develop the project by getting involved with important research activities such as testing new technologies in their homes, and taking part in detailed energy assessments.

If you would be interested in getting involved, contact BCBC's Sustainable Development Team on 01656 643133 and ask to speak to Ceri Williams or Michael Jenkins.

Residents who take part will be offered financial reimbursement for their time and to cover any increased fuel costs. Anyone who lives in a rented property will need permission from their landlord.

Bridgend PACT meetings

LITCHARD, PENDRE and COITY PACT will be held at Litchard Mission, Litchard on Thursday, January 19 at 7pm.

REST BAY and NOTTAGE PACT will be held at Nottage Scout Hall, Nottage on Tuesday, January 24 at 8pm.

PORTHCAWL WEST CENTRAL PACT at Trinity Church on Tuesday, January 24 at 7pm.

BRACKLA PACT will be held at Brackla Junior School, Brackla Way, Thursday, January 26 at 6.30pm.

Readers' Letters

Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL or email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

- Letters and e-mails MUST include your FULL address and a contact telephone number.

An email address alone is not sufficient!

We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail.

'Hunt sab' responds

IN reply to the letter, 'Dismay at dangerous hunt-sab Cowbridge' by Alasdair T Forbes, I was that peaceful protester in Cowbridge on Boxing Day.

At no time did I wave a white sheet (banner) in front of the Glamorgan Hunt, the banner was held taut at all times.

I would not have put any horse, rider, crowd, or myself in jeopardy. I held the banner in front of the hunt then stepped from the centre of the road to the left hand side, to allow them to proceed up through the town.

The banner I used displayed a painting of a fox and a huntsman with the words 'Beauty and The Beast' (which may I point out to readers was spelt correctly and not incorrectly, as one comment suggests).

I did wear a faux fur hat on that Boxing Day. I calmly replied to a lady heckler in the crowd who shouted: "She's wearing a fur hat."

I replied: "It's fake."

A few other ladies joined in, shouting the same comments. There is a saying we are a little like sheep, if one person does a thing usually another will follow, and I find this sometimes to be true and amusing.

As for behaviour: I protested peacefully, and this was seen by the crowds in Cowbridge on Boxing Day. However, not everyone behaved in such a manner.

One well dressed gentleman spat at my feet. I again replied in a calm manner: "That was not a very nice thing to do."

This act was seen by a lady and gentleman standing next to him.

As for being a hunt saboteur, I have never (fortunately) had to protect a fox from someone trying to hurt or kill it, but if I were, my actions would be somewhat different, and then would be worthy of the name 'hunt saboteur'.

Sharon Richards, Barry.

Working hard on winter flu jabs

I AM writing in relation to the article in The GEM on January 12 concerning Andrew RT Davies AM's comments on ward closures in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.

We are working hard to make sure that as many staff as possible have the flu vaccination.

We continue to promote the vaccine and are recruiting more Flu Champions to deliver the jab on our wards.

Our efforts have seen uptake increase every year for the past five years, with our current uptake close to our target for the year.

However, we know we need to do more and we are also working alongside other health boards in Wales to share best practice, as we know that the challenges in increasing staff uptake are not unique to Cardiff and the Vale.

Increasing our uptake involves a cultural change and, with staff engagement continuing to improve, we are hopeful that we will hit our uptake goal by the end of this flu season, in line with the Welsh Government's targets.

We currently have three wards at University Hospital Llandough and three wards at University Hospital of Wales affected by flu.

All of the wards are open; however, some beds have been temporarily closed to new admissions to prevent further spread of infection.

Visitors are permitted; however, we would advise against it – unless absolutely necessary.

Jamie Mills,
Communications and Engagement Officer, Public Health Wales, Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team, Whitchurch Hospital.

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Who Am I?

Loneliness despair
Doesn't anyone care
Please help me I pray
As I face another day
Isolation and hurt
But I am looked at like dirt
Not many are at ease
With this non contagious disease
My illness is blind
So I am left behind
I don't have cancer
So I must be an attention seeking chancer
Next time you choose to ignore
Please notice me I applaud
A kind word for a person with a broken mind
Is more precious than gold
For my illness is real and I do feel.

Have you guessed who has written this poem? I am someone who cares for and lives with someone with a mental health condition and there is still a lot of single minded ignorance that surrounds the whole aspect of mental illness.

A GEM reader.

HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL JANUARY 26)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
19 Thur	10.57	8.2	23.23	8.0
20 Fri	11.47	7.8		
21 Sat	00.22	7.6	12.49	7.7
22 Sun	01.36	7.6	14.06	7.7
23 Mon	02.47	7.7	15.19	7.9
24 Tues	03.53	8.1	16.17	8.3
25 Wed	04.46	8.4	17.02	8.5
26 Thur	05.26	8.9	17.47	9.1

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should check with a tide table specific to their location.

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Some households to receive a 'cut in council tax'

FOLLOWING public consultation, Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has confirmed details of its 2017-18 council tax reduction scheme, offering thousands of households on low incomes help meeting the cost of their council tax.

The scheme provides eligible people with a reduction on their council tax bills of up to 100 per cent, and there are currently 14,251 households in Bridgend county borough, out of a total of 63,446, receiving council tax reduction.

The Welsh Government sets the main features of the national scheme, but each has discretionary powers to amend some elements of the scheme.

At a meeting of full council on Wednesday, January 11, councillors heard the results of a public consultation, which was carried out between October 31 and December 18, 2016.

A BCBC spokesman said: "Councillors agreed with public opinion that war disablement pensions, war widows pensions and war widowers pensions should continue not to be included when calculating an applicant's income.

"A total of 681 residents completed the survey, and 62 per cent of respondents were in favour of war pensions not being taken into account.

"Councillors also agreed that local residents who return to work after getting a council tax reduction can, if they qualify, get an extra four weeks' council tax reduction at the same rate.

"After considering the consultation's findings, it was also confirmed that BCBC will now backdate council tax reduction applications for three months, which is the Welsh Government standard. The local authority had previously backdated claims for six months.

"Fifty four per cent of respondents to the survey supported lowering the six-month backdating period.

Coun Hywel Williams, the council's Deputy Leader, said: "Thanks to everyone who took the time to share their views on the council tax reduction scheme."

To receive a council tax reduction, residents must apply to the council either by calling 01656 643643 or by emailing benefits@bridgend.gov.uk

GEM NOTE. Residents receiving the single person's discount of 25 per cent are ***only*** *included if they qualify for other council tax reductions.*

Pontycymmer couple admit supplying cannabis

by AJ SICLUNA

A COUPLE from Pontycymmer dealt in cannabis, Cardiff Crown Court has been told.

David Haydon (30) and Zoey Haydon (30), from Upper Adare, Pontycymmer, admitted a joint charge of supplying cannabis.

The couple also admitted individual charges of supplying the drug and David Haydon pleaded guilty to causing damage.

Prosecutor Matthew Cobb said that a woman bought cannabis from the couple's home on several occasions.

On New Year's Eve of last year, David Haydon cycled to her home with £10 worth of cannabis. He was later found on the premises and had damaged a stairgate.

The police discovered the couple had been dealing from their home and during a search, recovered £100.

David Haydon was said to have convictions for 30 other offences, including possessing drugs and violence in various forms.

His counsel, Christopher Rees, said the offences were over a year old and there had been no further offending, Both, he said, were heavy users of cannabis and the offences were minor.

Alex Greenwood, for Zoey Haydon, who is 26 weeks pregnant, said that she had recently been screened negative for all intoxicants.

David Haydon was jailed for 32 weeks, suspended for two years, and ordered to carry out 100 hours unpaid work.

His wife was given a conditional discharge of one year.

Judge David Wyn Morgan told them: "Your biggest problem is that the drug squad know about you. If there is a hint of cannabis in your area, yours is the first door they will knock."

New plaques for museum will keep the memory of 'The Rest' alive

PICTURED (left to right): Ceri Joseph, Porthcawl Museum; James Groombridge, managing director at Acorn and Georgia Evans, development co-ordinator. Photo by David Swidenbank

A NUMBER of plaques commemorating The Rest Convalescence House have been unveiled by Acorn Property Group at Porthcawl Museum.

Acorn Property Group was delighted to be able to hand over a memorial plaque for safe-keeping by the museum staff in Porthcawl so that the building's legacy will live on in the town.

The convalescence home, known locally as The Rest, played a huge part in the history of the town, its residents, visitors to this coastal town and not forgetting those who benefited from a recuperative stay there.

James Groombridge, managing director at Acorn, said: "We are pleased to have been given the opportunity to restore and sympathetically develop this beautiful Victorian listed building so that it remains an eye-catching addition to the coastal vista.

"We are very excited that after sitting empty for three years, the redevelopment of the former convalescence home into luxury seaside apartments means life will once again live within its walls."

The plaque marks the building of the Children's Wing of the Rest by the inhabitants of the County of Glamorgan and commemorates the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.

The Rest was opened in 1862 by Dr James Lewis, when it consisted of just three cottages in Newton, Porthcawl, before moving to its current location. Further extensions were added in 1885 and 1893, thanks to land donated by the Talbot family.

Demolition of the more recent ancillary buildings to the rear of The Rest is now underway and Acorn anticipates starting the main conversion works this summer.

Paul Joseph, chairman of Porthcawl Museum and Historical Society, commented that the museum was pleased to accept the plaque and looked forward to working with the Acorn property group as the redevelopment of the Rest progresses.

For information visit www.porthcawlmuseum.com.

Scheme for adults to stay healthy in their own homes

From left: Susan Cooper, Coun Huw David, Rebecca Evans AM, Huw Irranca-Davies AM, and Hilary Dover of ABMU Health Board.

SERVICES that enable adults in Bridgend to live healthy, independent lives in their own homes were highlighted last week, as Rebecca Evans, Minister for Social Services and Public Health, paid a visit to Trem y Mor, the base of the local community resource team.

They are being developed as part of the Western Bay programme's health and social care integration agenda, bringing the health, social care and voluntary sectors together.

Thanks to investment from the Welsh Government's Intermediate Care Fund, health and social care experts are able to visit people in their own homes to provide the treatment and support they need, which is resulting in fewer unnecessary and unsettling hospital admissions, a spokesperson explained.

"Treatments ordinarily administered in hospital, such as a course of intravenous antibiotics, can now be given in a patient's own home.

"Receiving treatment in the comfort of their own home not only helps them to retain their independence but also enables them to recover more quickly.

"It's boosting the health and wellbeing of its recipients while ensuring more secondary care beds are available for those who really need them."

The team in Trem y Mor includes staff from reablement, physiotherapy, nursing, social work and occupational therapy teams, who work together to 'decide the best way forward' for each individual.

Rebecca Evans, Minister for Social Services and Public Health, said: "Through bringing local partners together, Western Bay's innovative, integrated services are making a real difference to the lives of people in Bridgend and further afield.

"I am very pleased the Welsh Government has been able to allocate over £10 million to Western Bay as part of the £60 million Intermediate Care Fund in 2016-17."

Coun Huw David, Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council, said: "These services are an example of how alternatives to traditional care can prove better for everyone involved.

"The Western Bay programme enables Bridgend County Borough Council to come together with its partners in the ABMU Health Board and the third and independent sectors to make a real difference to the quality of people's lives".

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Ogmore MP congratulates Sony chief at Pencoed

THE Ogmore MP, Chris Elmore, visited Sony UK Technology Centre in Pencoed to congratulate its managing director on being named as one of the most influential manufacturers in the UK.

Chris Elmore MP at SONY.

The Labour MP who lives in Pencoed, where the innovative manufacturing facility is based, said managing director Steve Dalton OBE should be "very proud" after being named among the top manufacturers in the country.

Mr Dalton was included in the Manufacturer Top 100 list out of hundreds of names across the UK-wide industry.

The MP said: "Steve should be very proud to be on the Manufacturer Top 100 list. It's a testament to both Steve and the work the team have done over the last 10 years.

"Sony is a leader in technology sector and its long-standing links to Pencoed and the surrounding communities is one of great pride for the company, and its commitment moving forward is clear for all to see.

"The Sony UK Technology Centre is an outstanding facility, my thanks to the team for welcoming me today."

During his visit the MP was given a tour of the facility by Mr Dalton and director of professional services, Gerald Kelly.

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AM in a visit to newly established local sixth form

Penybont Sixth Form pupil Cameron Fyvie-Davies and Viv Buckley, deputy principal at Bridgend College, with Alun Davies AM.

PENCOED Comprehensive School and Bridgend College welcomed Alun Davies AM to see the new partnership working between the college and the recently-established Penybont Sixth Form at Pencoed Comprehensive.

This innovative partnership has seen a newly refurbished sixth form centre opened at the school, improving the resources for teaching and learning, along with the communal facilities.

A school spokesperson said: "A key advantage of this partnership is the additional opportunities on offer through the college such as master-classes, use of college facilities and a wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits.

"The Penybont Sixth Form Pencoed Academy also offers a wide range of AS and A Level subjects."

During the visit, Alun Davies met pupils, David George, headteacher and the governing body.

There will be an open evening for the Penybont Sixth Form College at Pencoed Comprehensive School on Thursday, February 9 between 5pm and 7pm.

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YOUR CHANCE TO SHARE THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Laleston WI

THE January meeting was opened by president Dawn Storie, who welcomed everyone and wished them a happy New Year. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and agreed.

The Federation newsletter was discussed, along with other items on the agenda. The potential new resolutions for the NFWI campaigns were read out, considered and votes collected.

Details of future outings to the GFWI Denman College lunch at the Aberavon Beach Hotel, GFWI fashion show at the Nolton House Hotel and a day trip to Leekes were given out.

Our 'Beetle Drive' was won by Jane Lewis, the competition by Betty Hart and the raffle by Naomi Williams.

The luncheon club will be on February 7 and the book club, at Bridgend library, will take place on February 14.

Our next meeting will be held on February 2 at 7.15pm in Blandy Hall (Laleston gardening club). Our guest speaker will be Dean Powell with his talk on Glyn Houston. The competition is 'Valley Memorabilia'.

New members are always welcome, why not come along and join us? For further information call Diane on 01656 656600.

Proud to be Welsh

THE Mayor of Maesteg's fund is presenting an evening of music titled 'Proud To Be Welsh' starring ladies' choir Harmony and men's choir Maesteg Gleemen.

This event takes place at Maesteg Workman's Social Club on Friday, February 24 at 7pm. Tickets are £5, available from the mayor's office or choir members.

Befriending

THE MHM Wales befriending project is continuing into 2017 thanks to funding from Caring Together, Western Bay Health and Social Care Programme to support people 50+ living in Bridgend county borough affected by mental health illness, emotional issues and/or learning disabilities.

The team are looking for volunteers to help in the newly extended service at the Princess of Wales Hospital, supporting patients during their hospital stay and following their discharge home to provide friendship and companionship.

For more information telephone the befriending team on 01656 767045.

Community chorus

BRACKLA Community Chorus welcomes new members. Rehearsals resumed on Wednesday, January 11 from 7pm to 9pm at Brackla Community Centre. For further information telephone Mr Roger Jones, the secretary on 01656 861095.

Young singers

THE Dunraven Welsh young singer competition, organised by the Maesteg Gleemen is open to youngsters aged 11 upwards and the heats are being held in Maesteg Town Hall on Saturday, January 28 with the finals in the town hall on Saturday, March 25.

These are the children who will be competing in the aged between 11 – 14 section:

Megan Prance (Porthcawl), Sophie Louise Thomas (Maesteg), Millie Stables (Porthcawl), Tom Herbert (Ysgol Llangynwyd), Carys Davies (Monmouth), Jack Edward Cox (Radyr), Elys Davies (Porthcawl).

Competing in the 15 – 18 section are:

Mitchell Rhys Davies (Porthcawl), Megan Grace Jones (St Martins Comp), Matthew Daly (Bryntirion), Holly Davies (St John the Baptist, C/Wales), Martha Watkins (Cynfig), Llinos Haf Jones (Ysgol Bro Morgannwg), Tessa Webber (Porthcawl), Lucy Vinen (Porthcawl), Charlotte Adams (Cowbridge).

The adults competing in the 19 – 28 section are:

Robert Lewis (tenor), Kieron Connor Valentine (counter-tenor), Rhian Saunders (soprano), Erin Alexander (soprano), Emyr Wyn Jones (bass/baritone), Meilir Jones (bass/baritone), Angharad Kathy Davies (soprano), Ellen Williams (soprano), Sian Dicker (soprano), Jessica Robinson (soprano), Lukasz Karauda (bass), Aoife O'Connell (soprano), and Joanna Harries (mezzo).

The Gleemen rehearse on Monday and Thursday evenings from 7pm to 8.30pm at the Royal British Legion Club, Commercial Street. Visitors and new members are made most welcome.

NORTH BRIDGEND NEWS

A message for all readers in the north of Bridgend who would like to have items included in the community news columns of The GEM:

If you wish to submit reports on any social activity in this region, please contact me.

I am very approachable and will endeavour to include every newsworthy subject.

Contact details: CLIVE MITCHELL
1 Tyn-Y-Coed Close, Sarn, Bridgend CF32 9NQ
TEL: 01656 725399
email: tynycoed1@yahoo.co.uk

Health awareness

BRIDGEND Communities First are holding a free healthy awareness event at Maesteg Town Hall on Tuesday, January 24 2017 from 10.30am – 12.30pm.

It is free to all those living in Bridgend Communities First areas, advance booking required by contacting Jeremy on 01656 643518.

Cefn Cribwr Community Centre

KENFIG Hill and District Male Voice Choir (with guest artists) is performing its annual concert on Saturday, January 28 at 7pm. Tickets are £5 from the choristers.

St Bride's Memorial Hall, Bryncethin

THE courses listed below are free to all those living in Bridgend Communities First postcode areas.

Bridgend Communities First Entry 3 play work training course on Friday, January 20 from 9.15am – 12pm. Develop your communication skills and understand how creative play helps child development.

Bridgend Communities First Level 2 counselling skills course on January 19 and 23 from 9.15am – 3pm. Are you interested in learning counselling skills? If so, come along to the accredited two-day course and gain a qualification! Free lunch provided.

Bridgend Communities First Level 1 play work training course on January 24 and 27 from 9.15am – 12pm.

Advance booking is required for these courses by calling Jenny on 01656 643693.

Funding cut

AT Tynyrheol Primary School, Llangeinor, the Communities First funding for Mr John Ambani has not been continued for the remainder of the school year, so Mr Ambani will not be continuing.

However, Mrs Jo Blackman and the teaching staff are looking at ways they can continue to support the excellent maths help that he provided.

The following children are the first to win star awards for their school work in 2017.

Nursery: Oliver Watkins for confidently recognising numbers 0-5. Reception: Jacob Barnes for being super confident when reading his books. Year-1: Menna Fielder-Hobbs for good ideas about success criteria for story writing. Year-2: Grace Pascoe for always being so helpful and reliable. Year-3: Owain Standing for his great enthusiasm and ideas for our story writing. Year-4: Dafydd Jeremy for trying hard all day to complete all work. Year-5: Dylan Sage for working hard at maths. Year-6: Brandon Riddiford for reaching his spelling targets.

Netball finals

EIGHT primary schools have netted a place in the finals of the Bridgend county borough netball championship after shining on court at recent netball festivals organised in partnership by Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and Welsh Netball.

Plasnewydd, Nantymoel, Maes yr Haul and West Park primary schools came top during four festivals held recently, with runners-up Caerau, Ogmore Vale, Pencoed and Mynydd Cynffig schools also going through to the finals in February.

The top two teams at the finals will then go up against primary schools from Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff in the Glamorgan Valleys final for the opportunity to reach the Welsh finals, which will take place at Sophia Gardens in Cardiff in May.

Young netballers have been lucky enough to have three Celtic Dragon players on hand during the Bridgend county festivals. Bethan Dyke – Celtic Dragons WA/C from Bridgend, Kalifa McCollin – Celtic Dragons GA/GS from Trinidad and Tobago and Stacey Peeters – Celtic Dragons WD/C from New Zealand have been helping the teams on the court, giving tips to players, and giving autographs and having photos with the teams.

To find out more about local netball clubs visit www.welshnetball.co.uk or call 02920 334952.

For more details on sporting opportunities within schools contact the council's AYPD on 01656 815224 or email aypd@bridgend.gov.uk.

Panto

AT Maesteg Town Hall families with young children can enjoy a good old-fashioned pantomime, *Beauty and The Beast* on Friday, January 20 at 7pm and January 21/22 at 2pm. Call 01656 815995 for information and tickets.

Youth Theatre is bringing 'Fiddler' to Porthcawl

Left to right (back row): Lucy Vinen, Phoebe Lewis, Olivia Hopper, Mali Thomas. (Front row): Taya Beechey and Iman Rossaye.

THE Bridgend Youth Theatre (BYT) is returning to the Grand Pavilion in Porthcawl in February to perform another classic musical – *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Last year's choice of *West Side Story* was very well received, and many of the cast will be back again.

The award-winning musical, set in pre-revolutionary Russia, has as its main character Jewish milkman 'Tevye' played by long term member Owen Rhys Evans.

It's Owen's first lead role, and he is getting to grips with a larger-than-life character whose best-known number in the show is, of course, 'If I Were a Rich Man'.

Among Tevye's worries is how to marry off three of his daughters, played by Olivia Hopper, Phoebe Lewis and Lucy Vinen. However, there is such depth in the BYT these days that this trio will alternate the roles with Elin Morris, Maddie Dawson and Jasmine Jones.

The Jewish community also has to contend with growing anti-Semitic sentiment threatening his village.

The cast, with a lavish orchestra led by Nathan Jones, tell this heart-warming story of fathers and daughters, husbands and wives and the timeless traditions that define faith and family.

Roger Burnell, the artistic director of Bridgend Youth Theatre and director of *Fiddler On The Roof*, had this to say about the upcoming production.

"The cast have, yet again, been fully committed to the adventure. Their maturity and determination in rehearsals has been outstanding.

"We are sure you are in for an emotional yet enjoyable experience!"

Now in its 18th year, BYT is an established BAFTA award-winning theatre company run in partnership with It's My Shout Productions Ltd.

BYT is an exciting youth drama organisation that offers many experiences in theatre, dance, film and television. Many BYT 'graduates' now work in the industry on a regular basis.

The show will be performed over three days, February 23, 24 and 25. The February 23 show (Thursday 7.30pm) will be an open dress rehearsal.

On Friday and Saturday (February 24, 25) there will be two shows on each day, at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Tickets can be obtained from the box office on 01656 815995; or www.grandpavilion.co.uk

Barry analyst Marc gears up for Six Nations challenge with under-20s

by GEM REPORTER

AN extended Wales Under 20 squad met recently in preparation for their Six Nations campaign which starts next month and one of the key members of the backroom staff was National Academy analyst Marc Carter who is from Barry.

Wales begin their Six Nations under 20 campaign against Italy on Friday, February 3, and then return home to play England a week later in north Wales at Parc Eirias on Friday, February 10, kick-off 7.15pm.

Analysts like Marc are rarely seen and infrequently heard – situated on match days behind a bank of laptop screens or a camera high up in the gantry. But they are a crucial component in any modern, professional sports team.

As a native of Barry who attended Ysgol Glantaf in Cardiff it was through Cardiff Blues that Marc Carter got his big break in sports analysis.

A sports management degree at Swansea Met had entailed a year of football coaching in the USA, but no sooner had he returned to the UK than he'd been accepted onto an internship programme with the capital city region.

Marc recalled: "I landed on the Saturday and started the internship on the Monday.

"In truth, I had little time to reflect from stepping off that plane.

"I then started working with Phil Davies at Cardiff RFC, and he brought me along as an intern with Wales Under 20.

"Within six months I was offered a job in with north Wales rugby club RGC, so things moved very quickly."

Things didn't slow down for Marc. RGC's strong North American ties at the time – they had no fewer than nine Canadian players in their squad in 2010 – meant he was soon helping the Canadian national side adapt to new analysis software on their European tour.

"I was only 23 at the time, so it was an incredible experience for me. An academy role then came up at Scarlets so I moved back from north Wales.

"During my three seasons with the academy I was assisting with Wales Under 18 – including three tours to South Africa – so it was really good for my progression."

AMAZED

After two further years with Scarlets as an analyst for the senior team, Marc joined the under-20s national team on a permanent basis last year.

He's amazed at how much rugby analysis has changed since his first day as an intern with the Blues.

"I remember Rhodri Manning (now Blues' head of performance analysis) called me in and showed me some of the equipment.

"We had one camera view and basic coding. I had absolutely no knowledge at the time, but because it all happened so fast, I had no choice but to learn quickly.

"Now there's so much academia behind analysis, with places like Cardiff Met and the University of Glamorgan offering full-time degrees, modules and Masters programmes.

"It is a huge part of sport now. The depth in opposition analysis we do, the previews, training statistics and player tracking with Wales Under 20s is a very major part of our approach now."

Marc said players were getting up to speed with the information provided by analysts.

"Near enough every player will be in an academy system already, so they'll be familiar with the analysis software.

"The most important part from my point of view is letting the players understand what they're watching, not just watching it for the sake of it.

"Some of them will be 18 years of age, but it is amazing how they understand the game already."

Coaches and analysts are constantly assessing how new players can be integrated into international squads.

"From year to year, we could have 60 to 70 per cent new faces in the squad because of the nature of age group rugby, so it is really important for the coaches to understand the players who are coming through and how they fit the way we want to play.

"Overall, there's a younger squad this year, so a few of those players will be here next year as well, which is great.

"Last year they had an older squad and won the Grand Slam, and that showed the benefit of being together for an extended period. The coaches are particularly excited because we had a good under 18 team last year too, so we hope that talent can carry through."

Marc is particularly excited about returning to Parc Eirias next month.

"The buy-in from north Wales has been excellent. Seeing the children from the local rugby clubs clapping the boys out onto the pitch is brilliant.

"Everyone in north Wales is supportive of the game and the team, which makes it a great home for the under 20s."

For ticket information, people can go to the Welsh Rugby Union website: http://www.wru.co.uk/eng/matchcentre/results_and_fixtures_wales_u20.php

Analyst Marc Carter (left) with Wales Under 20s' head coach Jason Strange

Ogmore MP joins scarfie campaign to save lives

EVERY 10 seconds someone has a potentially life-threatening asthma attack in the UK – often triggered by cold air – and Ogmore MP Chris Elmore recently joined Asthma UK to launch their #scarfie campaign.

"The campaign is to promote wrapping a scarf loosely over your nose and mouth to warm up the air before you breathe. The simple tip, could save the life of someone with asthma," he explained.

"We all know someone with asthma. This simple task can potentially save lives!

"I'm happy to promote this work from Asthma UK and I invite everyone to share their #scarfies on social media!"

RED CROSS FIRST AID COURSE

A SELF-harm first aid course runs on Monday, February 20 from 6.30pm–8pm at MHM Wales, Union Offices, Quarella Road, Bridgend, CF31 1JW.

It is aimed at carers/family members who are supporting people that might be self-harming and includes: what to do if someone has taken something harmful (overdose); what to do if someone is unresponsive; how to deal with bleeds/burns and broken bones.

Contact Karen or Alun on 01656 651450 to register.

Who wants to build what and where?

Mike Parry – **8 Gelliaur, Pencoed** – Replace existing single skin garden wall with double skin wall and increase height of part of front section to no more than 2m.

J and S Jones – **The Old House, Llangynwyd Village, Llangynwyd, Maesteg** – Renovation and remodelling of public house and associated outbuildings, the demolition of detached and attached structures and building of a new extension to contain public bar, restaurant facilities, kitchen, cellar, related ancillary accommodation and four guest apartments.

Mr Robert Carmody – **6 Kenfig Mews, Kenfig Hill** – Retrospective permission for garage (6m x 6m x 2.260h).

Clarke Telecom Ltd – **Heol y Cyw Rugby Club Car Park, High Street, Heol y Cyw** – Proposed base station installation.

Bridgend County Borough Council Education Department – **East of Heol yr Ysgol, Tondu – Amendment to P/16/578/BCB.**

Mr Behzad Ahmadi – **Lluest House, Pantygog, Pontycymmer** – Approval of details for condition 2 of P/16/646/FUL.

Mr Martyn Watts-Jones – **Church Hall, Church Street, Aberkenfig** – change of use of redundant church hall site; demolition of former church hall and erection of two new semi-detached dwellings.

Mr and Mrs Martin Hobbs – **Warren Hill, Bryn Road, Coychurch** – Revision of approval P/15/83/FUL to include alterations to previously approved detached garage, affecting footpath 13 Coychurch Lower.

Mr and Mrs D Hopkins – **Ty Risha Farm, Penycae, Penyfai** – Proposed kennels and cattery and temporary dwelling.

Darren Powell – **4 Ramsey Close, Porthcawl** – Single store rear extension with a first floor sun room to extend kitchen/dining and utility room facilities, including fenestration/general finishes improvements and new canopy over entrance door at front of the property.

Stephen Foley – **97 Merthyr Mawr Road, Bridgend** – Approval of details for condition 4 of P/14/563/RLX.

Mrs C Phelps – **13 Ael y Bryn, Caerau, Maesteg** – External lift and associated works.

Whittington Landscape – **Pandy Crescent Playground, Pyle** – Creation of a pocket park on existing grass verge, including expansion of existing play area and widening of footpaths.

Mr Alden Holden – **Hugo Bank, 13 West Drive, Porthcawl** – Proposed extension to front and rear of property including provision of front balconies. New roof accommodation including erection of roof dormers and change of existing hipped roof to gable roof. Works to include creation of basement area under kitchen/sun lounge area.

Shaun Middleton – **Plot 10, land north of Abergarw Farm, Brynmenyn** – Discharge of conditions 2, 4, 6 and 7 of P/16/239/FUL.

Mr Nicholas Martyn – **4 Commercial Street, Kenfig Hill** – Discharge of condition 2 of P/16/863/FUL.

Rob Jones BCBC – **Area of land to rear of The Oaks, Fenwick Drive, Brackla** – Works to trees to include pollard ash tree and remove limbs of oak trees.

Mr Lloyd Richards – **Plot 17, Land north of Abergarw Farm, Brynmenyn** – Approval of details for conditions 2, 4, 6 and 7 of P/16/653/RES.

Tony Heard – **29 Hollyhock Drive, Brackla** – Reduce overhanging lateral branches by approximately 4-5 metres on group of Oak trees growing towards the property and reduce limbs of Ash tree overhanging the garage by 3 metres.

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When Porthcawl gathered together to offer support to the Sandville Self-Help Centre!

AS was reported in last week's GEM, there was a great turnout for the Twelfth Night Gala Fancy Dress Ball in aid of the Sandville Self Help Centre – held as usual at the Hi-Tide Inn, in Mackworth Road, Porthcawl.

Last week's photographs (by Keith E Morgan) showed a number of the winning fancy dress entries, but there was plenty of ingenuity and imagination on show that night, so this page is devoted to entries who, although they didn't win a top prize, still put on a great show!

All in all, it was a great example of a community pulling together to help one of its favourite local charities.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEITH E MORGAN

Club boosts charity

PENCOED Bowls Club has raised £1,600 for Y Bwthyn Newydd, a specialist palliative cancer care service based at Princess of Wales Hospital, through donations from members and various events.

Members took part in fancy dress, special bowls competitions, craft and baking sales and donated sponsorship for one member who went on a 180-mile trek in the Himalayas.

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From left: President OJ Paton, Sarah Harris and a former president, John Craxton, with a small sample of spectacles.

Lions praise 'Spectacle Man' John...

PRESIDENT of Bridgend Lions Club OJ Paton has thanked the club's 'Spectacle Man', John Craxton, who has worked tirelessly since 2008 in his quiet manner pursuing a great spectacle collection, albeit suffering ill-health along the way, to send to Medico France.

During the first year, he dispatched 1,400 pairs and from the end of June 2015 to January 2016 a total of 1,950 was forwarded to Medico France. The glasses are cleaned and graded before being sent to recipients in Africa, India and eastern Europe – a grand total of 20,000 spectacles in all.

His collection points are the eye clinic at Princess of Wales Hospital; Optic Shop and Gwyn Evans Optician, Bridgend; Hope Baptist and United Reformed Churches; jewellery and watch stall at Bridgend indoor market; local schools, and the blood clinic at Pontyclun.

The club's youngest member, Sarah Harris, is a great asset to the club with her modern technology knowledge and helps John with the distribution of the spectacle recycling receptacles.

John and Sarah visit local schools and explain to the pupils the benefit of recycling spectacles that are no longer needed. **CT**

Porthcawl Townswomen's Guild update

I HOPE it is not too late to wish you all a Happy New Year!

It may be colder now, but there is always a warm welcome at the Townswomen's Guild. We invite visitors to come and try us out for two months and then, hopefully, decide to join us.

At our first committee meeting of 2017 we were looking ahead, planning events and outings.

We have already decided to hold another cream tea in August as it was so successful last year.

This month's meeting started on a sad note yet again, as members stood in memory of Beryl Jones, a long-time Guild member.

Beryl was on the committee for many years as secretary, chairman and Federation delegate. She was a lovely lady whose wise counsel will be greatly missed. Her packed funeral was attended by many Guild members.

At our meeting, David Anderson led us on a trip 'Discovering Italy'. His film presentations are always enjoyed.

Among all the beautiful architecture of ancient Italy, he showed us one particular picture which made us think. This was of the Empress Theodora who, 1,500 years ago, was a campaigner for the rights of women and girls.

Today, this work is still needed around the world, especially in Ethiopia, where atrocities still occur.

Our next meeting is on February 8 at 2pm at All Saints Church Hall, when Alison Westwood will demonstrate 'Eclipse gift wrapping'. Before that, there will be a coffee morning at the RAFA Club on January 24 at 10.30am. Do come along and get to know us!

DOROTHY THOMAS

Free thermometers for elderly in the county

From left: Age Cymru's Angharad Phillips, Phyllis Preece and WPD's Kyle Sims with the thermometer cards.

BRIDGEND county borough's older residents can claim a free thermometer card to help them make sure their homes are warm enough, but not too warm, during cold weather.

Age Cymru has teamed up with Western Power Distribution (WPD) to produce the thermometer cards, which show when a home is ideally heated to between 18 and 21 degrees Celsius (65 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit).

If homes are too cold, it can put them at risk of hypothermia, strokes or heart attacks. If homes are too warm they are at risk of overheating.

The thermometer cards also carry handy information from WPD about what to do in the event of a power cut and how to contact them.

They are available from Age Cymru, at 37 John Street, Porthcawl, CF36 3AP, or by contacting Age Cymru Advice on freephone 08000 223 444.

Visit www.agecymru.org.uk for more information.

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A WEE BURNS NIGHT!

THE events committee at Llantwit Major is hosting an early Burns Night on Saturday, January 24 – with funds raised to be shared by a skin cancer charity and events in the town.

Liz Evans said: "We're holding the event at Llantonian Hall starting at 7.30pm. There will be a two-course meal for £17.50.

"The food is being prepared by Farmers Pantry.

"Of course, because it is Burns Night, there will be bagpipers, and a lot more!"

For more information, go to the Llantwit Major events committee page.

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STRIKE THREAT TO ROUTINE OPERATIONS IN LOCAL HOSPITALS

OPERATIONS at the Princess of Wales Hospital could be cancelled or postponed on the next two Wednesdays – if a solution can't be found to a pay row, writes PHILIP IRWIN.

UNISON announced on Tuesday (January 17) that staff at Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University (ABMU) Health Board hospitals working in the sterilisation and disinfection units will take strike action on Wednesday, January 25 and Wednesday, February 1.

The union warned that non-emergency surgery is likely to be severely disrupted.

The cause of the strike is a grading issue, with the union arguing that some staff are in the wrong pay band.

A UNISON spokesman said that 96 per cent of participating staff voted in favour of industrial action, saying ing they were "infuriated" that their claim for pay parity with colleagues doing the same job in other hospitals in Wales, has not been taken seriously by the Health Board.

The spokesman said: "Operating theatres, wards and clinics could not function without the work of assistant technical officers (ATOs) in the hospital sterilisation and disinfection units.

"They are skilled professionals, decontaminating hospitals and surgical instruments to a very high standard.

"Elsewhere in Wales, these staff are employed on Band 3. At ABMU by contrast, ATOs work to an out-of-date job description and inferior rates of pay on Band 2.

"Across a year, ABMU staff are worse off by between £466 and £1,879, depending on their length of service in the post."

A parallel pay dispute with the x-ray departments has been resolved.

Mark Turner, UNISON organiser for ABMU, said: "Hospital sterilisation staff don't feel the health board is listening to them or properly understands the work they undertake.

"They are highly-skilled technicians of many years training, yet are treated as though they have just walked in off the street.

"They are extremely disappointed that after two years of discussions the health board continues to ignore their very reasonable claim, in the hope they will go away. With negotiation, we have been able to resolve a similar dispute in the x-ray departments, which shows agreement is possible – if the health board is willing.

"Rather than search for a compromise, however, senior managers seem more interested in antagonising these workers. Our plea to the board is: recognise the anger you have created, and pay the appropriate rate for the job, so that strike action can be avoided."

A spokeswoman for ABMU said: *"We would like to make it clear that all our staff – no matter what their role within the health board – are valued and make an important contribute to the care of our patients.*

"We have been working with UNISON to develop a new job description for ATOs in ABMU and have reached agreement on the majority of areas, apart from the necessary qualification.

"We believe the current service we provide in HSDU needs to have a workforce with a mixture of skills at Bands 2 and 3.

"With changing models of service delivery this may change in the future. Our understanding is, that across Wales, only in Hywel Dda Health Board, where a different service is provided, are all ATOs a Band 3.

"We are sorry our continuing discussions with UNISON have not been able to resolve our staff's concerns.

"We understand 54 Band 2 assistant technical officers (ATO) in HSDU have voted in favour of strike action.

"We remain, fully committed to continuing our partnership work with UNISON to resolve these concerns and have offered to involve ACAS to assist with this issue.

"In the meantime, we would like to reassure patients that should strike action go ahead, we will be working to ensure any disruption to services are minimal."

24-hour defibrillator

A POTENTIALLY life-saving device – a defibrillator – is now in place in Pencoed, and is available 24 hours a day.

Vicky Richards tries her hand at reviving a 'casualty'.

It was installed recently in the Texaco petrol station and foodstore in the town centre, which is open around the clock.

The defibrillator will be behind the counter, and a member of staff will be able to hand it to members of the public when needed.

Staff at April Complete Care Solutions set themselves the task of fundraising for a defibrillator, and organised a number of money-making events throughout 2016.

The official opening was performed by the Mayor of Pencoed, Coun John McCarthy.

The charity which distributes defibrillators around Wales, is Welsh Hearts, and it works with First Responders.

Gerard Rothwell, the national public access defibrillation manager at Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust, was on hand to provide a one-hour training session, for a number of local businesses and representatives of the community who attended.

Mat Hughes, of April Complete Care Solutions, told The GEM: "It was interesting to learn that the number of deaths from cardiac arrest could easily be reduced if a defibrillator was there sooner.

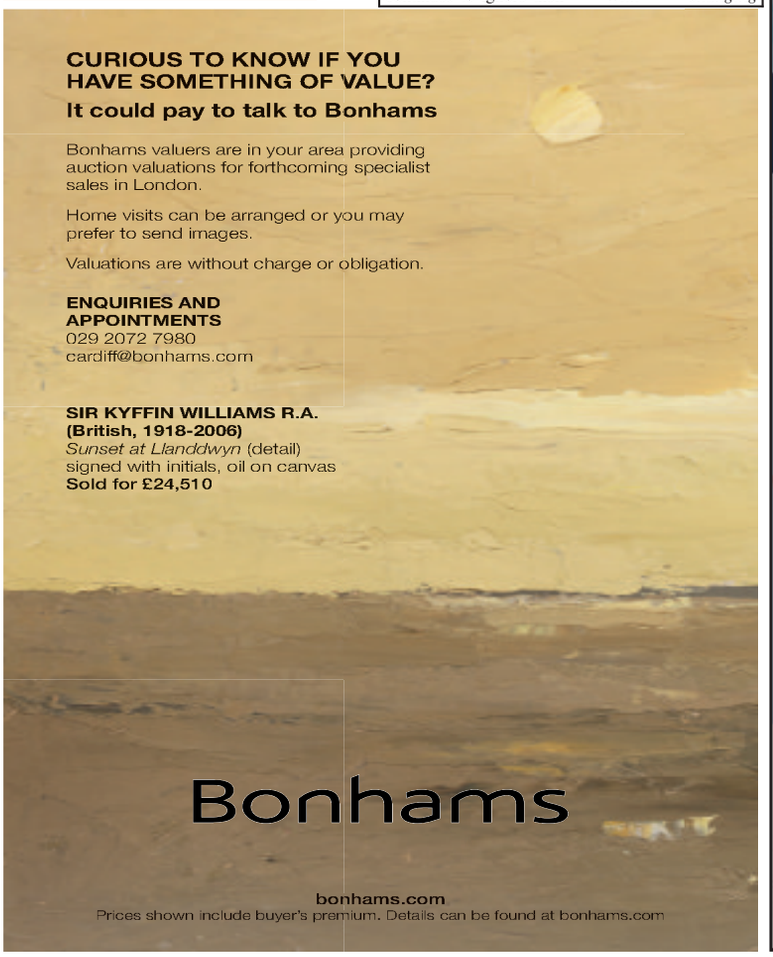
"Sometimes, the ambulance or first responder cannot get there fast enough.

"The ability to be there with a defibrillator within the first few minutes can make all the difference.

"Within this time and until professional help arrives, we learned that CPR should be performed alongside the defibrillator or in its absence at the very least, should one not be available. The training was invaluable, so again thanks to Gerard Rothwell."

Mr Hughes added: "Finally, we would like to thank all of the local businesses in Pencoed that contributed to the fund raising.

"It wouldn't have been possible without them!'"



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Renowned Cowbridge ballet teacher on quest for former students

by Andy Johnstone

WELL-KNOWN dance teacher, Moya Vahey founder of the School of Russian Classical Ballet in Cowbridge, is on a quest...

Last summer, she visited Jersey, where the Dance World Cup was being held, and met Fiona Breen (on left in the photograph), one of her former pupils from the 1980s.

"We have kept in touch over the years," recounted Moya, "exchanging Christmas cards and the like, and it was lovely to see her again."

"She gave me a photograph, reliably dated July 23 1980, taken at the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet examinations at my school in Cowbridge. "

Moya teaches the Legat Foundation Syllabus of Russian Classical Ballet, which is recognised for its fluidity and strength, as well as its elegant style.

A young Fiona Breen (left). Do you recognise any other of these dancers?

The style was founded by Nicolai Legat, a dancer and ballet master in the Mariinsky Theatre, St Petersburg. His students included legendary names such as Pavlova, Nijinsky, Karsavina,Vaganova and many more.

"I have been teaching this method of ballet in Cowbridge for 47 years, and I think my studio was then at the Institute [now housing Strawberry Fields greengrocers], although I have been at Bijou on Eastgate for five years.

The quest is now on to try and identify the other girls in the photograph.

"Perhaps some are still in the Vale, or even Cowbridge," said Hastings-born Moya, whose earlier training and career took her throughout Europe, and whose school has, since 1969, seen hundreds of young dancers take their first tentative terpsichorean steps and achieved grace, elegance and success since.

Do you recognise anyone in the photograph?

Please contact The GEM on 01446 774484; or emailgemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

Aled's support for Tenovus Cancer Care

TENOVUS Cancer Care has unveiled Paralympic, World and European champion, Aled Davies MBE, as its new Patron.

Aled, who won a gold medal in the shot put at the 2016 Rio Paralympics, will not only help the charity to raise funds but also will help them to raise a greater awareness of the work they do every day to help cancer patients and their loved ones.

The Welsh athlete said: "I'm truly humbled and honoured to be a Patron for Tenovus Cancer Care.

"I've been a supporter of the charity for numerous years. I've witnessed the incredible work they've been doing and have met the amazing team of people behind it.

"The support they provide is invaluable and I hope I can continue playing my part to support all the good work that's being done."

Clare Gallie, director of income generation said: "We're absolutely thrilled that Aled has agreed to become a Patron for us/

"He is such a talented and dedicated athlete and we can't wait for him to get involved. Welcome to Team Tenovus Cancer Care, Aled!"

If you or someone you love has been affected by cancer, Tenovus Cancer Care can offer help and support.

To find out more call the Tenovus Cancer Care free Support Line on 0808 808 1010 or visit tenovuscancercare.org.uk.

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Macmillan seeks volunteers

MACMILLAN Cancer Support is asking people in Wales to make volunteering their belated 2017 New Year resolution, to help it reach even more people who are affected by cancer.

Macmillan is looking for a range of volunteers, including ambassadors to deliver talks about the organisation and its work, fundraising group members to help organise local events and people who can help with local collections.

Whatever the role, volunteers will be helping Macmillan to increase awareness and raise money to help us support people affected by cancer.

Regional fundraising volunteer manager Catherine Winder, said: "January is a time for new beginnings, and setting ourselves resolutions for the year ahead – so why not set yourself a worthwhile resolution for 2017?

"There is a volunteering opportunity for you, and regardless of the role, you will be helping us to support people affected by cancer and to ensure that no one faces cancer alone.

"We appreciate that finding the time to volunteer can be challenging, so we have a range of roles to suit your existing commitments.

"Macmillan provides training if it's needed and offers ongoing support to ensure all our volunteers get the best possible experience while helping us be there for people affected by cancer."

People can register their interest at http://volunteering.macmillan.org.uk/ or by contacting Regional Fundraising Volunteer Manager Catherine Winder on 07736 277967 or cwinder@macmillan.org.uk.

GVS to host Heritage Lottery Fund surgery

STAFF at the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) are aware that some community and voluntary groups are nervous of filling in grant application forms. This is why they offer a one-to-one advice service where you can meet an HLF officer and talk through your project and the process of applying for a grant.

The HLF funds heritage projects but that doesn't just mean old buildings.

It can also include history and heritage reflected through communities, people's memories and stories and working with young people to explore ideas of identity and place.

Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) has announced that Julie Hughes, HLF Development Officer, will be available at their office in Barry Community Enterprise Centre, Skomer Road, Barry, CF62 9DA on Tuesday, January 31.

If you would like to book a meeting, contact HLF on 029 2034 3413 or e-mail Wales@hlf.org.uk by Tuesday 24th January 2017.

You will need to provide HLF with some basic information before the meeting through their website www.hlf.org.uk/english/howtoapply by Tuesday January 24.

They will then confirm your meeting slot.

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Extra £30million boost for affordable housing welcomed

Ogmore AM, Huw Irranca-Davies, has praised the Welsh Government's announcement that they will invest an additional £30 million this year towards providing 20,000 affordable new homes in Wales.

He said that the affordable housing target of 10,000 additional affordable homes in the last Assembly was exceeded, with the housing supply pact between the Welsh Government and Community Housing Cymru playing an important role in meeting that target.

"Locally, last year, both Rhondda Cynon Taf and Bridgend councils combined, were successful in providing 1,112 new affordable dwellings throughout the boroughs, allowing families who want to stay close to their home communities to live and work.

"It is encouraging to hear this news which highlights the Welsh Labour Government's plans to invest over £1.5 billion in affordable homes during this term of government.

" There is an acute shortage of housing in Wales and any investment will help in delivering good quality, affordable homes for children and families over the next 5 years," he added.

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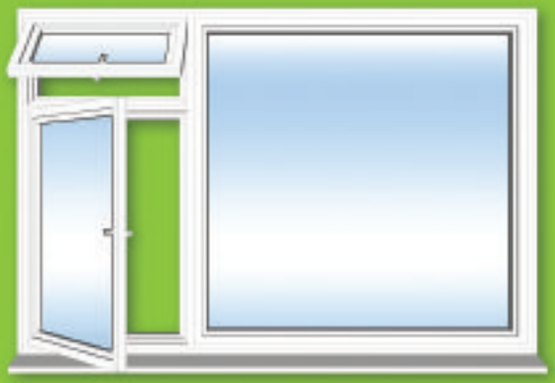

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Believe the hype... LA LA LAND IS A MASTERPIECE!

FOR a man making only his second feature film, Damien Chazelle showed he had no fear with 2015's taut and tense masterpiece *Whiplash*. A tour de force of storytelling, it highlighted Chazelle's skill – and also put even more pressure on his follow-up.

So far, any fears of an underwhelming next step have been unfounded, as *La La Land* has already received countless awards (including seven Golden Globes) and is sure to feature highly in the Oscar race.

A musical, it tells the story of Sebastian (Ryan Gosling), a jazz pianist, who meets Mia (Emma Stone), an aspiring actress coping with another setback in her career. The pair strike up a spark, but as failure gives way to success for both of them, will love be able to conquer all...

The opening scene of a film is integral to capture the audience's attention and set the tone for what's to follow. As *La La Land* opens with a breathtaking, single-take song and dance number on a Los Angeles freeway, the clever editing and fizzy cinematic visuals define perfectly what is to follow over the ensuing two hours or so.

If your heart is captivated by this bravura opening salvo, then expect it be overtaken with love and admiration by the time the end credits roll.

It's so easy to overly praise (or eye with cynicism) films that have been received with almost universal acclaim as *La La Land* has been. However, it is praise that is well-deserved and thoroughly justified; to call this film a masterpiece may be bold – but it's also true.

This is the film that comes along to define a period of time, to capture audience's attentions; it takes a Hollywood staple (in this case the musical), with a story partly about Hollywood itself, and imbibes it with a verve and spark that is both reverential to the genre, but also allows it breathe in the 21st century.

That it comes from a writer/director who is only on his third feature film in Damien Chazelle is most mind-blowing of all. If the framework of the story is one that has been played out before countless times, it's the delivery and execution of it that truly astounds, taking the familiar and giving it a fresh lick of paint.

Chazelle's bold direction is majestic, the camera constantly moving, the editing sharply done, slick without being too quick for its own good. His

by GARETH JAMIESON
Follow Screen Talk on Twitter – @GEMScreenTalk

use of long takes within scenes works terrifically well, showing faith in his two leads to allow their natural charisma and personality to shine through.

The musical numbers are staged with an élan that you can't help but fall for, yet by and large feel more grounded than fantastical, while the jazz music elements riff on Chazelle's ability to take things in unexpected and exciting directions.

He shows a warmth and wit, undercutting the glorious homages to the classic musicals like *Singin' In The Rain* and *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* with a modern twist, whether it's a dance number being interrupted by a mobile phone call, or a smoothly-shot sequence that leads to one of the film's laugh-out-loud moments (always pay attention to street signs!).

This is the third film that Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone have starred in together (*Gangster Squad* and *Crazy Stupid Love* are the other two for this future pub quiz question), and their chemistry and relationship onscreen is palpable.

This is a film that is essentially a two-hander, the film resting on their performances, but they make you fall in love with them and engage with them in naturally-charming performances. The song and dance numbers (which aren't as prevalent as you may think) are delivered with gusto by the pair, and draw you deeper into their relationship.

It's not all sunshine and happiness, but then that's the point that Chazelle makes as the story is told across five seasons (the visuals slyly echoing the changing of time); happy endings are earned, not deserved.

But this merely makes the film resonate even more, and come *La La Land's* subtly beautiful climax, you'll feel like you have truly experienced two people falling in love and all the joy and sadness that can bring, in what can only be described as the most incredible and exceptional film you're likely to see this year.

VERDICT: A solid gold masterpiece that is deserving of its lavish praise, *La La Land* is a *tour de force*, the perfect marriage of performance, direction, editing and storytelling. Damien Chazelle gives the film an incredibly cinematic visual feel; while the performances from Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone are gorgeously realised – without a doubt, you need *La La Land* in your life! *Essential viewing*.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *Singin' In The Rain* (1952), *The Artist* (2011).

Charity Swimathon is celebrating its 30th anniversary

SWIMATHON 2017 in Barry will raise money for Marie Curie Swimathon, the world's biggest annual fundraising swim.

The event will take place over the weekend April 7-9 and is extra special this year as Swimathon will be celebrating its 30th anniversary.

Swimmers can challenge themselves to the 5k, 2.5k or 1.5k Individual or Team 5k or 1.5k distances and raise funds for Marie Curie.

Marie Curie community fundraiser Clare Wright is encouraging people in the Vale to put on their swim suits and head down to Barry Leisure Centre to take in a Swimathon Challenge: "We're looking for swimmers to help make this the biggest and best Swimathon yet. In 2015, 22,600 swimmers took part and helped raise a brilliant £1.9 million for Marie Curie – a fantastic achievement but one we are hoping to beat this year."

For further information about Swimathon, including how to sign up, visit: www.Swimathon.org.

The sixth charity tractor run takes place on Sunday!

THE Glamorgan Iron Horse Vintage Society (GIHVS) is holding its sixth charity tractor run on Sunday, January 22.

The run – open to 4x4s as well as the iron horses – will leave Cwm Risca Farm, Tondu, CF32 0EH at 9.30am.

Organisers thank the Anthony family for hosting this annual event.

Funds raised will be given to the Wales Air Ambulance, the charity the club has supported for some years now and is on target to breach the £10,000 total this year.

What's on, and where?

Street surgery

PLAID Cymru's Buttrills ward team, including Coun Ian Johnson and Mark Hooper, will hold a street surgery in the Alexandra Gardens area of Barry this Saturday, January 21 between 10am and 11am.

Streets included are: Alexandra Crescent, Bedlington Terrace, Claude Road, Gadlys Road, Glanmor Crescent, Heol Dewi Sant, Heol Pantycelyn, Jenner Road (from low numbers to Trinity Street junction) and Ruthen Terrace.

Residents can contact Coun Johnson on 07738 182867 or ian.johnson@plaidcymru.org.

Ward advice

THE Labour Vale and town councillors for Buttrills, Castleland and Court wards Bronwen Brooks, Pamela Drake, Jeff Evans, Chris Elmore, Les Sword, Karl Khunell and Stuart Egan will be holding their regular advice surgery on Saturday, January 21 from 10am to 11am in the small community room, Barry Library, King Square. No appointment necessary.

Llantwit surgery

LLANTWIT First Independent councillors will hold a surgery at the Heritage Centre, Town Hall, Llantwit Major on Saturday, January 21 from 9.30am – 11.30am. Residents with any issue to raise are welcome to attend.

Care and Repair

IF you are a home owner or private tenant and live in the Vale of Glamorgan; elderly, disabled and need advice and support on repairs or home improvements, Care and Repair in Vale can help you to adapt and maintain your home.

They give advice on grants available and also on reputable companies to use. Age Connects Cardiff and Vale are holding an information session at the Age Connects Senior Health Shop, 38 Holton Road, Barry from 10am to midday on Tuesday, January 24. No appointment needed, just come along.

Call 01446 732385 for further information.

'Scams' – and how to avoid them

Do you think you have been the victim of a 'scam', and want to report it?

Come along to Age Connects Cardiff and Vale Senior Health Shop, 38 Holton Road, Barry on Tuesday, January 24 between 10am and midday.

You will be able to chat to an adviser and get information on the latest scams and how to deal with them.

No appointment is needed. Call 01446 732365 for further information.

Horticultural talk

THE next meeting of the Llantwit Major Horticultural Society will be on January 25 at Llantonian Hall, Llantwit Major. The speaker will give an informative talk on composting starting at 7.30pm. New members and visitors welcome.

Valeways guided walks

ON January 25 at Crwydro, Dathlu Santes Dwynwen, Prif Fynedfa Sain Ffagan; tal parcio (parking fee).

On January 25 the Coffee Shop Strollers in Barry meet at Romilly Cafe, Cold Knap at 10.30am. The Strollers meet at the Cowbridge Physic Garden fountain the same day at 2.30pm.

Gardening club

THE next meeting of the Cowbridge Gardening Club will be on Thursday, January 26 at 7.30pm in the Lesser Hall, Cowbridge, when the speaker will be Ivor Mace. His talk will be on 'Growing sweet peas and salad crops'.

New members welcome.

BIG SCREEN

BIG Screen's first film for 2017 is *Cafe Society* (cert 12A) on Thursday, January 26 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall.

This is a Woody Allen 'romcom' set in the Jazz Age.

Doors open 7.10pm, tickets £4 (in advance from the Town Clerk's office or on the door).

'Scams' – and how to avoid them

DO you think you have been the victim of a 'scam', and want to report it?

Come along to Age Connects Cardiff and Vale Senior Health Shop, 38 Holton Road, Barry on Tuesday, January 24 between 10am and midday.

You will be able to chat to an adviser and get information on the latest scams around, and how to deal with them.

Call 01446 732365 for further information. No appointment is needed.

Barry toy and train sale

A CHANGE of venue is advertised (for one date only) for the toy and train sale in Barry on January 29, from 10.30am – 3pm.

It will now take place at Holm View Leisure Centre, Skomer Road, Barry (CF62 9DA). Admission £2: come along and browse 75 tables – buy, sell or exchange. For more information call 01643 702757 or 07966 694579.

Floral Society

THE annual general meeting of the society will be held at the St Nicholas Hall, St Nicholas Road, Barry on Tuesday, January 31 beginning at 2.15pm.

During 2017 the society will celebrate its 55th anniversary with a number of special events. New members are always welcome.

Councillors' coffee

THE first councillors' coffee morning in Dinas Powys will be held on Saturday, February 7 in the Murch Community Hall (in Sunnycroft Lane) from 10.30am to noon.

Raise any issues with your councillors in a friendly atmosphere. Lots to discuss, including the bypass, the former St Cyres school site, building proposals, etc. All welcome.

For more information call Chris Franks on 07725 497423.

Barry Library

BOUNCE and rhyme every term-time Wednesday, 11am to 11.30am; singing sessions for children aged up to one year.

Code Club for ages 9 to 11 from January 20-February 17, 4pm- 5pm (term time only) – five-week session. Call 01446 422411/422425.

Colouring Club (adults) from Thursday, January 26 from 2pm to 3.30pm. Tea, coffee and biscuits available for £1.

Crochet for beginners Friday, January 27 from 3.30pm to 5pm, and Monday, January 30 from 5pm to 6.30pm; bring hook and yarn.

NHS breast screening

THE Breast Test Wales mobile screening unit is returning to Barry and will be situated at Memorial Hall from the start of February to early May.

Women aged between 50 and 70 this year, who live in Wales, will automatically receive postal invitations to attend for screening if they are registered with the following surgeries: West Quay medical centre, Rhoose medical centre, Ravenscourt surgery, Vale family practice, Rhoose surgery and Porthceri surgery.

Women aged over 70 will not automatically be invited for breast screening but can request an appointment by calling Breast Test Wales on 02920 397222. Anyone concerned about a breast change should visit their GP without delay.

Ccontact your GP practice or call Breast Test Wales on 02920 397222.

Sheers delight at Griffin Books

GRIFFIN Books, Penarth's independent bookshop, will host an evening with Owen Sheers, the bestselling author of *Resistance* and *I Saw A Man*, which was shortlisted for the Wales Book of the Year 2016 fiction prize.

Author Owen Sheers.

He will discuss his poetry, plays and novels, to coincide with the Sherman's forthcoming production of his verse-drama *Pink Mist*.

Mr Sheers will be discussing his work with journalist and writer Oliver Balch.

This event takes place on Friday, February 3 at All Saints Church, Victoria Square beginning at 7.30pm, with doors open from 7pm.

Tickets are £10 each including a glass of wine or soft drink (£7.50 for school students). Mr Sheers' books will be on sale at discounted prices on the night and he will be happy to sign copies.

Visit Griffin Books or call 02920 706455 to book tickets.

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Health team praised by minister

THE 'life-changing' impact of the team at the Blood Borne Virus (BBV) Outpatient Clinic at UHW has been praised by the Minister for Health.

Vaughan Gething AM, the Cabinet Secretary for Health Wellbeing and Sport, met the team during a visit to the hospital and was impressed with their work.

He spoke with staff and was told about their role as part of the national programme and some of the innovative steps the team are taking.

Mr Gething said: "I was delighted to meet the team, to see people from nursing, specialist nurses, people who run the clinic and some of the consultants too.

"To see that this is an 'all-Wales' team based here in Cardiff and see really high quality care, but really innovative care as well, where clinicians are taking a lead together on how to deliver a better service with better outcomes for patients."

The BBV clinic principally looks after patients with hepatitis B and C. It is designed to be as close to a one stop shop as is possible at present. Patients who attend have access to a medical opinion, a specialist nurse consultation, a specialist pharmacist consultation and a fibroscan – a non-invasive method for assessing liver disease.

Phlebotomy is carried out on site and treatment started and monitored within the clinic.

LABOUR, TORIES AND PLAID RESPOND AS...

Independents claim a victory over councillors' attendance details

by GEM REPORTER

INDEPENDENT councillors say a successful motion has forced the Vale Council to adopt a policy of publishing councillors' attendance details on its website.

The motion was put forward by Sully councillor Kevin Mahoney and seconded by fellow independents Chris Williams and Bob Penrose at December's full council meeting.

Some councillors argue that published 'attendance details' do not necessarily reflect the whole picture in relation to their duties.

Coun Mahoney told The GEM: "Since being elected, I always published my full attendance record on my own website in the yearly 'personal transparency report' that I post there. I find it astonishing that the Vale hasn't also automatically done so without my having to push through this motion.

"I think it is important that Vale residents have the opportunity to examine their own ward councillors' attendance records at council meetings, and while delighted to see my proposal voted through it was disappointing to note that every Labour councillor present voted against it."

RECORDED VOTES

Coun Mahoney said he was less happy about another motion which was rejected.

"On a less successful note, my re-presented motion to have all Vale councillors' votes automatically recorded for future public examination and explanation was voted down by a large majority 10 for 33 against".

"Again I was disappointed to see every Labour councillor present voting against, and with the Conservatives also voting against it seems clear that the majority of Vale councillors do not wish to see their voting records highlighted in order that local residents can see what decisions their ward councillors are making on their behalf. One can only wonder why.

"I would like to think that Vale council taxpayers are as disappointed as me that so many of their elected representatives are repeatedly fighting tooth and nail not to have a published record of their voting patterns on clear public display.

"This is the second time that I have presented this motion only for it to be voted out,

"It is heartening that at long last I have been able to persuade the Plaid group on the council, who GEM readers might recall were the most vociferous opponents of the automatic recording of votes the last time that I proposed it, to finally come round to my way of thinking, and to vote in favour along with the Independent group on this occasion."

Coun Mahoney added: "It's such a pity that it is left to myself and the other independents to repeatedly try to push through the openness and transparency for Vale residents that I feel that they deserve and which one would have thought should be an automatic procedure."

'WHOLE STORY'

Coun Neil Moore, Leader of the Labour Group on the Vale Council commented that a lot had been said about the attendance decision, but there had also been a great deal of mischief made about it too.

He pointed out that some councillors are involved in lots of other meetings on council business that would not be recorded.

He explained: "No one is opposed to their attendances being recorded at council meetings as this is already available through council meeting minutes, which are readily available on the council's website.

"The issue with the recent decision is that it does not tell the whole story of the work carried out by councillors.

"For example, many of us, especially those of us with special responsibilities, do not only attend council meetings.

"Many of us meet both internal and external colleagues which are never recorded and could not necessarily be recorded on a members' web page.

"What has been agreed is both misleading and can be misconstrued.

"Sometimes councillors miss a meeting because they have to be elsewhere on official business.

"I meet Welsh Government Ministers and officials on a regular basis. I also meet with all the other Welsh council leaders on a regular basis.

"None of these are recorded anywhere and attending such meetings means that sometimes I have had to give my apologies for meetings as I cannot be in two places at once.

"The situation is also compounded by the fact that many miss a meeting because they are ill, have other family commitments and sometimes because committee dates are changed at short notice and alternative arrangements and appointments have already been made, thereby preventing their attendance.

"On a personal basis, I spend hundreds of hours a month on council business, both in the office, at external meetings or at home, but none of those could ever be accounted for by council officers updating our individual web pages.

"Councillors also spend unaccounted time dealing with issues on their constituents' behalf or on their constituents' concerns. Many councillors also attend school governors' meetings or residents' meetings, etc.

"Therefore, although the principle of declaring when a councillor attends a meeting is laudable, in practice it does not give a full picture of their work."

Fellow Labour cabinet member Lis Burnett said she had opposed the attendance motion because it was politically motivated.

She said: "I am happy to publish my full calendar and have done so often in the past.

"I voted against Coun Mahoney's politically-motivated motion as it seeks to mislead Vale residents.

"A simple check will show that Coun Mahoney often attends fewer meetings in a whole year than many attend in a month or, for cabinet members, a week.

"It also fails to recognise external appointments and the valuable work many councillors do in school governing bodies, residents groups and local organisations, and misleads residents on the full extent of a councillor's workload.

"Probably more important than whether a councillor is present at a meeting is what they actually contribute while there."

Coun John Thomas said the Conservative group had no issue with votes being recorded.

He explained: "However, if this motion had been passed in the council meeting it would have meant the council investing in electronic voting equipment immediately with members having no idea as to the cost involved.

"Alternatively every member's vote would have to be taken individually for every decision made, which would not be practical.

"Although I believe the current system of recording votes when requested works, I would support the electronic recording of all votes once the financial implications of such a system have been fully explored."

SCRUTINY

Plaid Cymru councillor Ian Johnson said the party was keen to see full and transparent scrutiny of the Vale Council's £215m budget.

"That's why we support broadcasting council meetings on the internet, electronic voting to show whether councillors vote how they say they did and giving residents the right to speak at planning meetings, as they were able to on the recent Windsor Road United Reformed Church planning application."

"However, we're not purely obsessed with council constitution matters. Plaid Cymru councillors spend their time working for their constituents at scrutiny meetings and in the ward, being more concerned with improving results for our schoolchildren, clean-ing up our streets and attracting better jobs to the Vale."

Remembering brave women on St Dwynwen's day

ON January 25, Welsh Women's Aid will remember St Dwynwen's strength to recover from abuse and celebrate thousands of Welsh women who endure male violence every day.

St Dwynwen, celebrated in Wales as the patron saint of lovers, devoted her life to promoting loving relationships in the 5th Century, after surviving rape by her partner and escaping her father's attempt to force her to marry a man she did not love.

St Dwynwen's Day is usually promoted to celebrate loving and caring partnerships, but for some women in Wales it is just another day in which experiencing violence and abuse – dictates their relationships, and affects the rest of their lives.

Welsh Women's Aid wants to commemorate St Dwynwen's Day as a day to remember that most women who have experienced abuse still rise, every day, to hold down jobs, care for others, and hold families and communities together.

'Still We Rise' (January 25) will feature an evening of entertainment, including Welsh singer-songwriter Bronwen Lewis, DnA Folk, the African Community Choir Sanctuary Sisters, Maria and Emily Davies (mother and sister of Wales player Sam Davies), performances from the musical *Cappuccino Girls* and readings by survivors.

The event will be hosted by Mal Pope at Coast in Swansea, from 7pm-10pm. Tickets cost £15, including a buffet meal. To buy a ticket or donate the cost of a ticke, visit: *https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/still-we-rise-tickets-30029222212*

The award winning comedy writer, Sian Harries, will be joining Welsh Women's Aid as their new Ambassador.

Anyone affected by domestic abuse, sexual violence or any other form of violence against women in Wales, can contact the Live Fear Free helpline on 0808 80 10 800 for 24-hour confidential information and support, and help to access local services. The helpline now also operates a web chat provision between 9am–9pm every day. See http://livefearfree.gov.wales/how-to-get-help.

NEWS FROM FONMON APIARY

Tackling the curse of the Varroa mite

THE mild conditions prevail, although a brief spell of Arctic weather is forecast.

A timely reminder has been issued by the National Bee Unit pointing out that colonies could well run short of food due to their external activity brought on by the very mild conditions.

So far I have no worries about lack of stores because all of the colonies were well provided for.

Monitoring of the Varroa mite is an on-going activity of mine. This is achieved by way of trays inserted beneath the mesh floors. When I examine the debris (bits of wax and bees and dead mites) it is obvious that the Queens are still laying and new bees are emerging.

How do I know this? Well, the fallen Varroa mites indicate this very fact. Adult female mites are dark brown in colour, I am observing these brown mites along with pale (white) mites and it is the presence of pale mites that is the clue! Pale mites are only present when new bees are emerging.

Some of the adult mites, when viewed using a microscope, can be seen to be very bloated, this only occurs when they are ready to commence their breeding cycle. These bloated females must have been dislodged by a bee before they could enter a cell containing a larva that is about to go through its metamorphosis and emerge as a honeybee.

So how do the pale (white) mites appear along with the brown mites? When a Queen bee lays an egg in one of the cells in a honeycomb, in three days it will turn into a larva (maggot), for the next five to six days the bees (nurse bees) who look to the wellbeing of this larva will feed it and when the time is right, food will be deposited in the cell, a wax capping will be added, metamorphosis will be activated and some 12 days later a new bee should emerge.

Before the cell is sealed over, there is a chemical signal either from the nurse bee informing the larva that it is to be sealed in or the larva lets the nurse bee know it is ready to be sealed in. This chemical signal is also picked up by the adult Varroa mite and she enters the cell containing the larva and is sealed in with it.

The Varroa is now going to produce young within this sealed cell. Mother and offspring will live off the developing larva using its body fluids as a foodstuff. Because the Varroa cannot chew through the wax capping on the cell their feeding is done on the rear end of the larva, they leave the head end well alone. If the larva die because of the predation by the Varroa, then the adult Varroa and her young are doomed. It does occur that the new bee is ready to emerge from the cell, before all the young Varroa have reached maturity, hence I find pale mites.

These pale mites will die of course, and never become breeding females but they have affected the new bee's health, a sick bee emerges.

There are more problems due to the Varroa mite, but that is enough for now.

HAROLD WILLIAMS

Funding invite for charities

LOCAL good causes still have time to apply for funding from the Co-op, under its membership scheme.

The next round of funding which starts in early April and charitable organisations are invited to apply via its website: *–https://causes.coop.co.uk* – with the closing date for entries now extended until January 25.

History of Aberthaw limeworks

RHOOSE and District History Society will host a talk by Chris Jones-Jenkins FSA on 'Reconstructing Drawings of Aberthaw Limeworks' on Friday, January 27 at 7.30pm.

The talk will take place in the rear hall of Rhoose Community Centre, Stewart Road; tickets on the door, adults £1, children 50p.

New members welcome, £5 per annum.

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WINTER months are often the preferred time for brides and grooms to start preparations for a wedding in the spring or summer.

In the Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend, we are spoilt for wonderful locations to get married and to host celebration receptions.

Many couples are keen on a church wedding which combines faith, tradition and family ties.

Others like a civil ceremony which can take place either at the civic offices or at a properly licensed premises such as – wait for it – castles, hotels, manor houses and even piers!

But once those key decisions are made, people turn to the basic organisation of a wedding.

The list of things to consider can seem daunting.

What bride's dress will delight everyone – most importantly the bride? Who will print the invitations? What transport is needed? How can the reception venue be 'dressed' to add that twist of glamour? Where will you order the wedding rings? Don't forget the tiered cake! Who is going to DJ your evening disco?

Help is at hand. We are blessed with a host of local businesses dedicated to making 'the big day' more than memorable.

So, brides and grooms, put yourselves in their hands, take the stress off yourselves, and they will help to make the day unforgettable.

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'E-cigarette chargers safety risk' – warning

SHARED Regulatory Services is advising local businesses to proceed with caution when selling e-cigarette chargers to consumers – after more than half of the products they recently surveyed failed safety tests.

In total, 17 e-cigarette chargers were purchased from a number of small retailers across Bridgend, Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff, and 10 (58 per cent) failed an initial screening test.

The chargers were sent for further testing, but failed to meet the requirements of the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994 for a variety of reasons, including: markings/instructions; construction; protection from access to live parts and electric shock and pin length insufficient.

Officers seized all non-compliant chargers from the premises that had failures and issued advice to traders on how to avoid selling unsafe and non-compliant electrical items.

Coun Gwyn John, chair of the joint committee for Shared Regulatory Services, said: "The use of e-cigarettes as an alternative to tobacco products such as cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco is on the increase, and so the result of this survey sends a clear warning to businesses of the requirement to be diligent when selecting products to sell to the public.

"We are dedicated to protecting consumers from harm, so I hope this survey also helps raise awareness amongst our residents, and provides reassurance that our Trading Standards team is working hard to ensure unsafe and dangerous products are not being sold across the region."

To report an unsafe product, or for advice on your rights when purchasing goods or services, call Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 03454 040506. All calls are logged and forwarded to Shared Regulatory Services' Trading Standards team for assessment.

Coun Gwyn John, chair of the joint committee for Shared Regulatory Services, has urged residents "to be mindful of safety" when purchasing e-cigarette chargers.

Severn Bridge tolls cut will 'boost the Welsh economy'

Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Cairns, has announced that Severn Bridge tolls will be halved from 2018 onwards, with most drivers paying £1.50 to make the crossing in either direction.

Pictured are: David Davies MP (Monmouth), Alun Cairns MP, and Secretary of State for Transport Chris Grayling MP.

The lower toll charges would be introduced when the crossings return to public ownership and are intended to save drivers and businesses money, boosting the economy along the M4 corridor.

"The UK Government is also looking at removing toll barriers and introducing free-flow tolling on the Severn crossings that will help cut congestion and journey times.

"For some vehicles the cost of crossing the bridge will fall by 75 per cent with vans and small buses paying only £3 instead of the current £13.40 charge. For cars, the price will also fall to £3, less than half of the current £6.30 charge," he explained.

Mr Cairns, who is MP for the Vale of Glamorgan, made the announcement in a letter to all Welsh MPs and AMs, and publicly launched the proposals at the bridges with UK Government Transport Secretary Chris Grayling, on Friday.

He said: "This is excellent news for people living and working in Wales who use the Severn Bridge, particularly van drivers who will pay over 75 per cent less money. These savings will make a huge difference to those who use the crossing regularly and it will provide a major boost to companies pitching for new business, who can now be much more competitive.

"The Severn crossing is a vital artery into Wales and reduced tolls demonstrate once again that Wales remains open for business. The M4 corridor is at the heart of the Welsh economy, and enterprises from Carmarthen to Cowbridge, Cardiff and Caerphilly, should receive a welcome boost."

Opposition parties have criticised the UK Government for not removing the charge entirely when the bridges are returned to public ownership, but in Mr Cairns' letter to Welsh AMs and MPs, he explained the UK Government's decision to retain some charges:

"We want to be clear that there is no intention to use the tolls for any purpose other than to support their operation and maintenance, and to repay the debt incurred by the UK taxpayer to fix latent defects on the crossings."

LOCAL VETERANS AFFECTED BY LARIAM ARE URGED TO CONTACT FORCES' HELPLINE

by Andy Johnstone

FOR generations, Wales has been a fertile recruiting ground for all services of HM Armed Forces; a quick look in most cemeteries in Bridgend, Cowbridge and the Vale will evidence this and reveal at least one Commonwealth War Grave.

But in this time of anniversaries – halfway through the commemorations for the Great War, the 25th anniversary of the Gulf War last year, 25 years since British Forces first deployed to Bosnia and 35 years since the Falklands War – thoughts are with the health of the living, not the lives of the fallen.

UK Forces have routinely been prescribed Lariam (Mefloquine) for many years before deployment to theatres where malaria is a problem.

However, some personnel have reported serious psychological side effects including depression and suicidal ideation.

These effects, within the civilian population, would be bad enough, but tend to adversely affect those with frequent exposure to traumatic events, and those with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), insomnia, anxiety, alcohol and anger-management issues.

A Royal Marine of 45 Commando training in Ghana. *Image by PO (Phot) Wheelie A'barrow; © Crown copyright (2016).*

The first is an expected occupational hazard for many frontline troops and the others are all too common within the military.

Other side effects reported include nausea.

Speaking in May 2016, the then Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir David Richards, who had raised the issue of concern over the drug within the MoD, said: "If the use of Lariam is banned, or even restricted, it would not be before time."

Recognising these concerns, in October last year, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) launched the 'Mefloquine Single Point of Contact' for current and former Service personnel who have concerns about their experience of Lariam.

Speaking to The GEM, a Royal British Legion (RBL) spokesperson said: Any veterans in the Vale of Glamorgan or Bridgend who have been affected by the use of Lariam while a member of the Armed Forces should contact their GP and the new Mefloquine Single Point of Contact.

The spokesperson continued: "The RBL believes service personnel should only be prescribed Lariam where alternative anti-malarial drugs are inappropriate and after a face-to-face health risk assessment by a properly trained and regulated healthcare professional.

"We are concerned to learn of instances where this has not happened and has subsequently led to serious and long-lasting adverse health conditions."

The spokesperson said that the RBL is encouraged that the MoD is revising its malaria prevention policy, and would like to see this new guidance reissued to all relevant medical staff to ensure that any anti-malarial drugs prescribed are appropriate for the individual patient.

"We also welcome the establishment of the Mefloquine Single Point of Contact for current and former Service personnel who have concerns about their experience of Lariam, as this should help identify any negative health implications quickly and ensure that appropriate support is put in place for the individual concerned. "

Veterans who think their health has been adversely affected by the use of Lariam whilst a member of the Armed Forces, should contact their GP for health advice, and the new Mefloquine Single Point of Contact service on 0306 770 5059 or via SGDPHC-MEFLOQUINESPOC @mod.uk.

Calls to the line are confidential and no personal details are retained. Lines are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, except bank holidays.

'Get a winter flu jab' – AM urges

ON a visit to Evans Pharmacy in Barry, the Vale AM, Jane Hutt, received her winter flu vaccination, and is urging others to follow suit.

She said: "Winter brings significant pressures for the NHS, but flu vaccinations are one example of the good work pharmacies can do. The flu can be particularly severe for those aged over 65, children, pregnant women, and those with underlying health conditions or weakened immune systems.

"A vaccination can be really important and I would encourage people to go to a pharmacist and get theirs done. It's still not too late to do that."

HYSBYSIAD CYHOEDDUS

Mae'r Cynghorau Cymuned canlynol wedl mabwysladu Cod diwygiedig ynghylch yr ymddygiad a ddisgwylir gan aelodau ac aelodau cyfetholedig ar y cod model fel y'l rhagnodwyd o dan "Gorchymyn Awdurdodau Lleol (Cod Ymddygiad) (Cymru) (Diwygiad) 2016 - (Rhf : 2016/84)".

Mae copiau o'r cod a fabwysiadwyd gan bob cyngor ar gael i'w harchwilio gan aelodau'r cyhoeadd ar yr adegau a nodir isod:

Cyngor Cymuned Llanbedr-y-fro
Clerc: Mrs. J. Howell
Nant y Wern, Llanbedr-y-fro.
CF5 6LG. Rhif ffôn: 01446 761107

Cyngor Cymuned St George's a St Brides-Super-Ely
Clerc: Mrs. J. Howell
Nant y Wern, Llanbedr-y-fro.
CF5 6LG. Rhif ffôn: 01446 761107

Cyngor Cymuned Tregolwyn
Clerc: Mrs. J. Howell
Nant y Wern, Llanbedr-y-fro.
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Cyngor Cymuned Llangan
Clerc: Mrs. J. Howell
Nant y Wern, Llanbedr-y-fro.
CF5 6LG. Rhif ffôn: 01446 761107

Cyngor Cymuned y Wîg
Clerc: Y Cynghorydd Conway Hawkins
E-bost: wickcommunitycouncil@gmail.com
Rhif ffôn: 07710209437 (Trwy apwyntiad yn unig)

Cyngor Cymuned Sain Niclas gyda Thresimwn
Cadeirydd: Mr. P. Fisher
43 Village Farm, Tresimwn, CF5 6TY
Rhif ffôn: 01446 781686

Cyngor Cymuned Sain Dunwyd
Clerc: Mrs. A. Knight
21 Monmouth Way, Trebefered, Llanilltud Fawr, CF61 2GT Rhif ffôn: 01446794529

Cyngor Cymunedol Lland
Clerc: Mr. D. L. Jones
47 Cefn Road, Cefn Cribwr, Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr. CF32 0BA. Rhif ffôn: 01656 741354

Cyngor Cymunedol Saint-y-brid
Clerc: Delyth Brunsdon
31 T Gwyn Drive, Bracla, Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr, CF31 2QF Rhif ffôn: 01656 650004

Cyngor Cymunedol Ewenni
Clerc: Mrs. C. Flower
14 Parc Glyn, Broadlands, Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr, CF31 5EA Rhif ffôn: 01656 711783

PUBLIC NOTICE

The following Community Councils have adopted an amended Code as regards the conduct which is expected of members and co-opted members on the model code as prescribed under "Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016 - (No: 2016/84.)".

Copies of the code adopted by each council are available for inspection by members of the public at the times shown below:

Peterston-Super-Ely Community Council
Clerk: Mrs. J. Howell
Nant y Wern, Peterston super Ely.
CF5 6LG. Tel: 01446 76110

St Georges and St Brides-Super-Ely Community Council
Clerk: Mrs. J. Howell
Nant y Wern, Peterston super Ely.
CF5 6LG. Tel: 01446 761107

Colwinston Community Council
Clerk: Mrs. J. Howell
Nant y Wern, Peterston super Ely.
CF5 6LG. Tel: 01446 761107

Llangan Community Council
Clerk: Mrs. J. Howell
Nant y Wern, Peterston super Ely.
CF5 6LG. Tel: 01446 761107

Wick Community Council
Clerk: Councillor. Conway Hawkins
Email: wickcommunitycouncil@gmail.com
Tel: 07710209437 (By appointment only)

St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council
Chair: Mr. P. Fisher
43 Village Farm, Bonvilston, CF5 6TY
Tel: 01446 781686

St Donats Community Council
Clerk: Mrs. A. Knight
21 Monmouth Way, Boverton, Llantwit Major, CF61 2GT Tel: 01446794529

Llandow Community Council
Clerk: Mr. D. L. Jones
47 Cefn Road, Cefn Cribwr, Bridgend.
CF32 0BA Tel: 01656 741354

St Brides Major Community Council
Clerk: Delyth Brunsdon
31 Ty Gwyn Drive, Brackla, Bridgend,
CF31 2QF Tel: 01656 650004.

Ewenny Community Council
Clerk: Mrs. C. Flower
14 Vale Park, Broadlands, Bridgend,
CF31 5EA Tel: 01656 711783

CHOIR HANDS £1,618 FROM CONCERT TO TY HAFAN CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

PETER EVANS, chairman of the South Wales Male Choir is pictured with members of the Cardiff group from Barry and the Vale, presenting a cheque for £1,618 to Emma Sankey, regional community fundraiser of Ty Hafan children's hospice at Sully – the proceeds of a recently-held concert in Penarth.

The rescue at Kenfig Sands.

Thrown horse rider rescued by the RNLI

PORTHCAWL RNLI crew were paged by UK Coastguards just before 1pm on Sunday, January 15 following reports that a female horse rider was injured at Kenfig Sands, Sker Beach.

The D class lifeboat, *Jean Ryall*, was launched with four crew aboard and soon arrived on scene, two miles north west of the station.

Due to the remoteness of the incident, the UK Coastguard co-ordinated a multi-agency rescue plan.

It included Porthcawl Coastguard unit conveying a paramedic from an NHS land ambulance across Kenfig Nature Reserve to Sker beach; a Coastguard Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter being scrambled; and the RNLI lifeboat making an approach by sea.

Lifeboat crewman, Chris Page, said: "The tide was right out, so our helmsman landed us as close to the reported incident area as he could.

"However, we then found that we had to make best speed by foot carrying our first aid kit over half a mile across the beach.

"We were first on scene and carried out first aid, at the same time a colleague cleared a landing site for the SAR helicopter."

An RNLI spokesman reported that: "The casualty had head injuries and was very cold from being temporarily unconscious and lying on the cold wet sand. Once the helicopter had landed on the beach air crew and the NHS paramedic carried out further medical assistance before the casualty was flown direct to the University Hospital Wales, Heath Cardiff."

Lifeboat deputy launch authority, Aileen Jones, said: "People don't normally associate our lifeboats with being launched to land-based casualties, but as shown today this was the quickest way to reach the casualty and get first aid started.

"This rescue was a multi-agency effort where all teams worked together under the UK Coastguard Agency.

"Hopefully, the casualty will make a full recovery."

Families back brain tumour campaign

THE families of two south Wales girls whose brain tumour symptoms were missed repeatedly by doctors are backing a UK-wide campaign to raise awareness of the disease.

Five-year-old Lil Davies from Cardiff and eight-year-old Layla-mae Cummings from Barry both suffered from health problems for months before they were diagnosed with a brain tumour.

Now their families are speaking out in support of HeadSmart, a campaign run by The Brain Tumour Charity to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of childhood brain tumours.

HeadSmart has already helped cut the average diagnosis time for a childhood brain tumour in the UK from more than 13 weeks to seven weeks.

A new drive aims to bring that figure below four weeks, in order to save lives and reduce the long-term disability caused by childhood brain tumours.

Lil Davies suffered from severe headaches, loss of mobility and personality changes for months before she was diagnosed with a brain tumour.

Desperate mum Amanda finally took Lil to her local accident and emergency department in August 2014. She told staff the then three-year-old had fallen and banged her head at home, in order to secure the brain scan she was convinced Lil needed.

The scan revealed a cancerous brain tumour the size of a lemon.

Layla-mae Cummings was diagnosed with a brain tumour in 2013 after more than a year of health problems including seizures, memory loss, vomiting, headaches and blurred vision.

A CT scan showed nothing obviously wrong and doctors suggested she had an infection in her brain.

Layla-mae Cummings

However, her health continued to deteriorate. Eventually, after 12 months and three cancelled appointments, Layla-mae had an MRI scan at the Noah's Ark Children's Hospital in Cardiff. The scan revealed a brain tumour.

The relaunched HeadSmart campaign will focus on healthcare professionals, parents and teenagers in a bid to ensure young patients with possible brain tumour symptoms are referred for specialist help as quickly as possible.

Hayley Epps, campaign manager for The Brain Tumour Charity, said: "Brain tumours kill more children in the UK than any other type of cancer. HeadSmart has two aims: to save lives and reduce long-term disability by bringing down diagnosis times.

"Relaunching the campaign will help us to achieve those goals by alerting more healthcare professionals, parents and young people to the signs and symptoms of the disease.

"What happened to Lil and to Layla-mae shows very clearly why HeadSmart is so important. We are very grateful to both families for their support."

Following her diagnosis, Lil, now five, had surgery to remove the tumour and then proton beam therapy in the US. She is monitored regularly to check for any signs that the tumour is regrowing but scans so far have been clear.

Layla-mae also had surgery to remove her tumour but a follow-up scan in April last year showed more abnormal tissue in her brain.

Although the tumour is believed to be slow-growing, she may need further treatment or surgery.

HeadSmart was formally relaunched last week at the Royal College of General Practitioners in London, where doctors will take part in a workshop to learn about the signs and symptoms of childhood brain tumours.

For more information, go to headsmart.org.uk.

'Clean streets should be our focus not fines' says councillor

PLAID CYMRU councillor Ian Johnson says that street-cleaning to pick up and remove litter is more important than a deterrent to stop people dropping rubbish.

He was speaking after a question to full council which showed that 50 fixed penalty notices were given out by new environmental enforcement company 3GS in the first month of action in October 2016, and recent news stories where local businesses have been fined for not locking their commercial rubbish bins.

Of the first 50 fines, 41 were given for dropping cigarette waste, five for general litter, one for unauthorised distribution of free matter and three for spitting.

A previous environmental enforcement company, XFOR, was heavily criticised in 2012-13 for its concentration on fining smokers.

Coun Johnson, who represents the centre of Barry, said: "This is the second time that the Vale Council has introduced a private environmental enforcement company to help keep our streets clean, and once again it is not having the effect we hoped.

"While a deterrent will make some people think twice about dropping a wrapper or stubbing out a cigarette on the floor, this doesn't really make a huge difference to the cleanliness of our towns.

"Spitting isn't nice but fining people for it is hardly going to stop our dog mess problem.

"Clean streets – free of litter and dog mess – should be our focus, not fines. The Vale Council should invest in more street-cleaners to keep the streets tidy and to clean up dog fouling problems on residential streets."

PACT meetings

GIBBONSDOWN – meet your local neighbourhood team at Aberaeron HUB, Aberaeron Close, Barry every Monday between 10am and 12 noon.

GIBBONSDOWN PACT will take place at the Residents' Board Office on Tuesday, January 24 at 10.30am.

BUTTRILLS PACT will take place on Thursday, January 26 at 6.30pm at Barry Town Council Offices (at the side of the Memorial Hall).

LLANDOW/EWENNY coffee and chat at the Victoria Inn, Siginstone, near Llandow on Tuesday, January 24 at 11am.

RHOOSE – meet your local officer at the Police Office, Rhoose Community Centre, Stewart Road, Rhoose on Tuesday, January 24 between 12 and 2pm.

If you have any issues that are affecting your quality of life, but are unable to attend a meeting, contact 101 for non emergencies or log onto: www.south-wales.police.uk, where you will find contact details for your local PCSO and you can contact them directly for non emergency matters.

'New businesses need more support'

NEW business start-ups in the Vale should be given more help and support, said Welsh Conservative Leader Andrew RT Davies AM, after reports that the number of new businesses starting up in Wales had fallen by 26 per cent over the past five years.

The South Wales Central regional AM stated that a number of factors, including the recent rises in business rates that caused particular issues in Cowbridge, had contributed to the problem.

While he welcomed the support announced by the Welsh Government just before Christmas, he pointed out that businesses still awaited permanent relief, and that other barriers facing new start-ups should be removed.

Mwy o Gymraeg os Gwelwch yn dda? – cynllun peiolot i fusnesau meicro lleol

MAE annog a hwyluso busnesau bach yng Nghymru i ddefnyddio mwy o Gymraeg yn golygu bod yr iaith yn cael ei gweld a'i chlywed yn ein cymunedau.

Mae Menter Bro Morgannwg, mewn partneriaeth â Llywodraeth Cymru, yn gweithredu cynllun peilot newydd i annog busnesau i weld gwerth dwyieithrwydd ac ymgorffori'r Gymraeg yn eu busnesau. Mae'r cynllun hefyd yn gyfle i godi ymwybyddiaeth o bwysigrwydd yr iaith fel rhywbeth sy'n medru cael ei ddefnyddio'n naturiol gan gwsmeriaid a chynyddu'r ewyllys da yn y gymuned.

Mae'r cynllun peilot, sydd yn rhad ac am ddim i fusnesau sy'n cymryd rhan, yn paratoi proffil syml i adnabod gofynion y busnes a chynnig cymorth a chyngor ymarferol ar sut i gynyddu darpariaeth.

Os oes diddordeb gyda chi i wybod mwy am y prosiect ac i gofrestru eich diddordeb, cysylltwch gyda Ffion Rhisiart ar 029 2068 9888 / ffion@menterbromorgannwg.cymru

MORE WELSH PLEASE? – Pilot scheme for small local businesses

ENCOURAGING and facilitating small businesses in Wales to use more Welsh means that the language is seen and heard more in our communities.

Menter Bro Morgannwg, in partnership with Welsh Government, is implementing a new pilot scheme in the Vale to encourage businesses to see the value of bilingualism and help to incorporate Welsh into their businesses.

The scheme also provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of the language as something that can be used by customers and increasing 'natural goodwill' in the community.

The scheme, free to participating businesses, will work with individuals and businesses to prepare a profile to identify requirements and offer practical support and advice on how to introduce or increase provision.

If you, or your business, would like to know more about the scheme or to sign up, contact Ffion Rhisiart on 029 2068 9888 / ffion@menterbromorgannwg.cymru

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Vale of Glamorgan Football League news round-up

IN a weather-affected few days only a handful of games were played in the Vale this past weekend.

We start in the Supporters Cup and the game of the day saw Barry Belgrade host league leaders Barry Athletic B.

The match lived up to the hype in an enthralling contest that could have gone either way. 90 minutes couldn't separate the teams but Athletic B found a winner in extra time to progress, Linford Harris notching both of Athletic B's goals.

Cadoxton Athletic also advanced over Cardiff Airport to make the quarter final.

In the Dockers Cup Barry Saints edged out St Athan B in an 11 goal thriller, 6-5; Joe Matthews, Arturs Zomerovskis, Chris Hegarty, Rhys Hocking plus two own goals finding the net for Barry Saints with Josh Howells (2), Craig Howells, Alex Harry and Colin George responding for St Athan B.

In the ASRS Cup holders Dinas Powys Athletic crashed out at the first hurdle with high-flying Cowbridge Town going through at their expense.

The draws were made for the three divisional cups on Saturday evening, ties to be played on February 11.

In the ASRS Cup, Cowbridge host Masons Moving Group, Rhoose take on Tynewydd, Barry Athletic play the winners of the rearranged Penarth vs Vale United game and St Athan will welcome Island Marine.

In the Supporters Cup Dockers host Barry Athletic B, Cadoxton Athletic await the winners of the postponed Pumas vs Cogan, Glenbrook play SP Billy and Sully welcome Cadoxton Barry.

The Dockers Cup quarter-finals line up with Island Marine B hosting Penarth B, FC Pumas B play Rhoose B, league leaders Cadoxton Imps take on BVFC and finally Barry Saints will face Barry Albion.

Only one league game was played, and Rhoose extended their excellent winning streak with an exciting 5-4 victory over Barry Athletic; that's six wins on the bounce for Rhoose as they go fourth. Notably for Athletic, Nathan Williams bagged himself a hat trick.

This week sees a full round of league fixtures, weather permitting, with the games of the day in each division looking like being Cowbridge vs Rhoose in the Premier League, Barry Athletic B hosting Cogan in the First Division and Barry Saints playing Island Marine B in the Second Division.

If anyone wants their goalscorers included in the report, email hyweldark@hotmail.co.uk by the day after the game.

HD

Proud Priory partnership for Barry RFC under-14s!

Pictured above are Barry RFC under-14s in their new kit, which is proudly sponsored by Rhys Williams of Priory Estate Agents.

Blast from the past – 1997

IN this week's Blast From The Past, Pip Jones lands her 100th winner on David Brace's *Lucky Ole Son* and Ian Prichard saddles his first winner with *Kristal Haze*.

Under the heading '*Lucky Ole Son* shines brightly to earn Pip her 100th winner', I reported that: "Wales' leading lady rider Pip Jones notched-up her 100th point-to-point winner at the Carmarthenshire Hunt Steeplechases on Sunday when winning the ladies' open race on 10-year-old *Lucky Ole Son*.

"*Lucky Ole Son*, who was the second leg of a double for Jones, scored by two lengths from *Kinloch Gale*.

"Jones also took the confined on *Conna Moss* and division three of the maiden on *Keep Flowing*, and all three are owned and trained by Bridgend businessman David Brace."

Jones, aged 27, from Rudry, who rode her first winner in her first ride in 1986, has also ridden 29 winners under Rules.

Reigning national champion Jamie Jukes, who landed a double at Larkhill on Saturday, brought his season's tally of wins to 11 when winning the restricted open on *Radio Days* and the maiden (division one) on *Hollow Sound*.

Both are owned by Cardiff's David Sprout and trained by Bert Lavis of Simpson Cross.

Jukes was badly bruised after falling from Castlemorris in division two of the maiden won by Phil Dando's *Kristal Haze*.

Ridden by Phil Williams, *Kristal Haze* is trained by Ian Prichard who was saddling his first winner.

Pony-sized *Touch N Pass*, ridden by Bridgend butcher Jon Tudor, won the men's open by six lengths from *Northern Bluff* despite making a mistake at the last.

Closest finish of the day came in division four of the maiden when John Day's *She Goes*, well ridden by Newport's Andrew Price, withheld the strong challenge of *Bobbie's Girl*.

I also revealed that: "This season the Pentyrch and the Gelligaer Farmers will hold their meetings over a new course at Redlands Park Farm, Bonvilston, on land owned by former point-to-point rider Tudor Harris. The course is said to be fairly flat one of two circuits and racegoers will be able to view the races from the centre of the track. However, it won't be the first time that point-to-points have taken place in the area."

For back in 1903, the Glamorgan Hunt held a point-to-point in fields not far from the Aubrey Arms and some of the riders wore hunting costume.

In 1904, Fred Williams, father of Evan Williams who won the 1937 Grand National on *Royal Mail*, won the farmers' race there on *Wynstay*.

A four-a-side team race between officers of the Glamorgan Imperial Yeomanry and officers of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers took place there in 1906, which resulted in a tie.

Bonvilston was also the scene of the Glamorgan Hunt fixture in 1906 when the races were held at Caemain Farm and again in 1914 when Captain Darby Rogers, whose son John many years later went on to train Derby winners *Hard Ridden* and *Santa Claus*, won on a horse called *Chellow*.

Brian Lee's latest book *Racing Rogues – The Scams, Scandals and Gambles of Horse Racing in Wales*, published by St David's Press, is according to the Racing Post: "A cracking read which lifts the lid on notorious Welsh gambles with many engrossing episodes with such colourful characters from the past such as Gomer Charles, Benny Jacobs and John Lovell."

BRIAN LEE

Housebuilder's 'substantial investment'

AS 2017 gets under way, Barratt Homes has revealed that it built 608 homes in South Wales during the past year and contributed £7.4m to communities where it is building new homes.

The figures form part of the company's socio-economic footprint which covers Barratt Homes and David Wilson Homes and indicate how much the local economy has benefitted from the new housing.

While the company itself has made more than £7 million of contributions to councils and for infrastructure and affordable housing for local people, it also calculates that it supported 1,300 jobs directly and indirectly and employs 22 graduates, apprentices and trainees.

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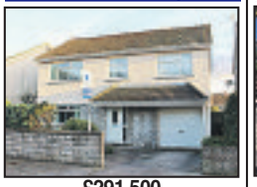

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Bridgend patient safety expert takes on UK-wide NHS role

Paul Lee.

A BRIDGEND-based scientist who plays a crucial role in ensuring patient safety across ABMU is lending his expertise to NHS organisations UK-wide.

ABMU's medical device training manager Paul Lee has been seconded to NHS Improvement in London to work as its patient safety lead for medical devices until August this year.

His new role will be helping to develop national advice and guidance to the NHS on reducing risks to patient safety.

He will use his 30 years of expertise in the NHS, and 13 years' experience working in ABMU, to help focus on medical device-related incidents, as well as identifying emerging issues with new technology.

Paul will work closely with royal colleges, the Department of Health and other regulatory organisations and healthcare groups.

A scientist registered with the UK Science Council, he is also involved with research and publications, as well as innovative practical applications. In 2015, he worked with Morriston emergency consultant Kirsty Dickson-Jardine and control of infection nurse Joanne Walters – along with a private company – on a cannula safety pack to reduce the risk of infections.

After being successfully introduced in Morriston emergency department it was taken up by other Welsh health boards, and went on to win a MediWales innovation award.

Paul, who lives in Bridgend, believes his wide-ranging remit within ABMU has put him in good stead for his new role: "It's a big challenge, but when I come back to the health board in August, I will have a much better overview of how we interact with government bodies, royal colleges and agencies."

Cycle route improvements in Porthcawl

IMPROVEMENT work has been completed along Porthcawl seafront, aiming to make it easier to cycle between two of the resort's most popular beaches, with footways along the esplanade and coastline widened, new tactile paving installed, along with new signage, and drainage improvements, said a Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) spokesperson.

New ornamental railings have also been installed next to Cosy Corner and four sets of bike racks have been placed along the seafront. The improvements mean that a shared cycle and pedestrian route now runs from Rest Bay to Sandy Bay.

BCBC was awarded £300,000 from the Coastal Communities Fund to carry out the improvements, and Coun Charles Smith, cabinet member for education, and regeneration said: "Visitors to Porthcawl seafront will have noticed a number of works being carried out in recent months, and as a keen cyclist myself, I am delighted to see that the scheme has now been completed.

"These improvements not only make it more enjoyable to ride along the coastline for leisure purposes, but they also encourage 'active travel' by making it more practical for people to walk or cycle their everyday journeys, such as to school or work, as the links to local attractions, facilities and businesses have been enhanced.

"The scheme forms part of the National Cycle Network Route 88, and is the latest step towards our long-term aspiration of improving the local cycle network further so that Porthcawl town centre is connected with all of the surrounding residential areas."

St Nicholas WI news

OUR year started with a light-hearted meeting with the vice-president in the chair.

Minutes of the last meeting, which was held in The Market Place restaurant before the Christmas dinner, were read. It had been an enjoyable evening, as was a visit to Pendoylan WI carol concert and supper and a coffee morning with Culverhouse Cross WI in aid of Denman College.

Six resolutions already detailed in WI Life were voted on by members and we await a decision on which one will go forward to the National Federation annual meeting, later in the year.

Following the business of the meeting, we celebrated the 80th birthday of our other vice-president, Ann Bryant, with wine and delicious refreshments prepared by Ann and her friend Wendy Jones.

We ended the evening with charades.

WL

Film crews boost our economy... but should they be given green light to park 'illegally'?

On the yellow lines on Bridgeman Road.

Bridgeman Road became one way up and down.

Vehicles were parked on double yellow lines heading up Beach Road.

by TIM CHAPMAN

A Penarth resident contacted The GEM last week to highlight the proliferation of film company pantechnicons standing alongside kerbs that have parking restictions.

The resident explained: "I've seen a number that have been parked on yellow lines and yellow hatches, and they cause quite serious problems. They seem to park wherever they want to."

He also said that if agreement had been granted, he wondered whether this was "underpinned by a policy or set guidance".

The resident contacted the Vale and the police to voice his concerns, wondering whether 'risk assessments' and been done and whether the the impact on residents and other road users had been considered.

He pointed out that Bridgeman Road had been reduced to just one lane up and down.

On this occasion, The GEM understands a company associated with Channel 4 was filming 'Born to Kill' a new thriller.

The GEM approached the Vale Council to ask whether it was aware of the situation.

A spokesperson said: "A television crew were given special dispensation to park on some restricted areas around Bridgeman Road in Penarth on Tuesday, January 11, as they were filming in the location.

"Permission was granted after consultation with the 'civil parking enforcement team' in Bridgend, who confirmed the arrangement would not cause undue disruption in the area.

"The film crew were also advised to contact the police to ensure parking the vehicles in that area was appropriate.

"There were conditions to permission being granted. They were not allowed to park within 10 metres of a junction or on the zig zag lines either side of a zebra crossing.

"Encouraging television companies to film in the Vale can be of major benefit to the area.

"That is especially true in this instance as Penarth Promenade is one of the county's most beautiful locations. Showcasing it can help boost tourism, which in turn gives the entire local economy a lift."

Sports under-11s edge thrilling encounter

BRIDGEND SPORTS under-11s welcomed Tonyrefail to the Bandstand Field on Sunday morning; while the weather was perfect for rugby the rain late in the week had produced a heavy pitch that proved challenging for both sides.

It served as a reminder that rugby is a game played in all conditions and the preceding week seemed to provide a sample of the weather from all four seasons.

Remarkably both sides produced some rugby that saw a total of 15 tries scored during four periods of 12 minutes. This enabled all players to have equal game time as both clubs hold values, true to the spirit of the WRU 'half a game' initiative.

The philosophy is a simple one, more people, more often, with more enjoyment and success for the game.

The Sports monopolised possession in the first period but scoring opportunities were restricted as the conditions played a part and the scrum featured as a frequent restart to play.

While the Sports may have conceded possession to produce scrums, they were adept at stealing it back from the opposition at the set piece.

This was evident early on as Tonyrefail kicked off, the Sports fielded and moved the ball out wide but then knocked on.

They took the scrum against the head and then moved it to Joel Rogers on the blind side wing, for him to jinx his way over for the first score.

The home team may have monopolised possession but Tonyrefail showed that they were comfortable in relying on any loose ball as they had players with pace who could score from any part of the field.

It was clear they would be competitive and pose some attacking threat.

The Sports however did manage to dominate the scoreboard in this first period with further tries from the impressive Mackenzie Dent and the elusive Joel Rogers.

Cian John, Callum Lewis, Tom Chick and Dylan Morgan were creative in attack whilst Meg Lewis, Mackenzie Dent, Dewi Worrall and Harri Williams did the hard work up front.

Tonyrefail kicked to the Sports at the start of the second period, the Sports gathered and retained possession to mount an attack but lost the ball at a breakdown where Tonyrefail moved it smartly to Sam Talbot who had the skill and pace to score from his own half.

The Sports hit back with a try after a scrum, Tom Chick made a break to set up a ruck, Harri Williams kept up the attack before Meg Lewis drove through the remaining defenders to score.

Tonyrefail scored two further tries in the period as Sam Talbot and Thomas Owen, nephew of former Bridgend favourite Frangcon Owen, used their pace to good effect.

With the Sports edging the overall game score 20-15, both sides had it all to play for, the third period ended with the overall scores level at 25-25.

Tonyrefail scored two tries again through Thomas Owen and Sam Talbot.

Harri Edmunds showed determination to score a try and keep the Sports level going into the final period, and the ever-present Thomas Coles spearheaded several attacks to keep up the pressure on the away team.

Tonyrefail scored the first try of the final period as Sam Talbot once again used his pace to open the Sports defence and lead the game for the first time. The score motivated the home team and they rediscovered their composure and began to dominate possession.

The pressure told as the Sports registered three further tries to lead 40-30 overall; but it was that player Sam Talbot who registered the final score for the game to end 40-35.

Both sides have great respect for each other and they produced an entertaining game on a sticky pitch.

Squad: Bailey Llewellyn Hopkins; Cadan Hayes; Callum Lewis; Chloe Gant; Cian John; Dewi Worrall; Dylan Morgan; Harri Edmunds; Harri Williams; Iestyn John; Ieuan Pilliner; Jodie Keane; Joel Rogers; Mackenzie Dent; Mason Balmer; Megan Lewis; Richard Kirkup; Thomas Chick; Thomas Coles; Theo Clarke; Tyler Burton and Will Ellis.

SP

Ogmore MP sponsors workers' rights Bill

OGMORE MP Chris Elmore has co-sponsored a bill in Parliament to protect workers' rights post-Brexit.

The bill, designed to protect things such as maternity leave, holiday pay and equal rights, was launched on Wednesday at an event in Westminster.

Mr Elmore said: "European law currently protects workers' rights, all this bill does is guarantees those rights once we leave the European Union. I think everyone will be in favour of safe working practices, holiday pay and maternity/paternity leave rights."

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LOCAL WILDLIFE EXPERTS INSIST...

'Swansea Bay energy scheme must be closely monitored'

by PHILIP IRWIN

THE massive Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon energy project has received the cautious support of local wildlife trusts – but only if comprehensive research into the likely effects on bird and fish habitats is completed first.

Supporters of the Swansea Tidal Lagoon scheme were encouraged by the recent report by former energy Minister Charles Hendry, although there are many hurdles still to be cleared – not least the price tag.

The Wildlife Trusts in Wales welcomed remarks in the Hendry Review that any tidal lagoon development in the UK should be subject to strict monitoring of any impacts on the marine environment, and adequate compensation for any resulting damage. One concern of the Wildlife Trusts in Wales, of course, is bird habitats, and the trusts agree that there is not a problem with Swansea.

However, the Hendry Review points out that a tidal lagoon in the Cardiff area would damage habitats, and the trusts are please that this has been acknowledged.

A spokesperson for the trusts said: "We are also pleased that the report recommends a pause between Swansea becoming operational and other plans for lagoons starting. The Wildlife Trusts in Wales would like to see at least eight years pause to cover two fish-spawning cycles."

Sarah Kessell, chief executive of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales, said: "The Wildlife Trusts support renewable energy and the UK's current targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, tackle climate change and increase the proportion of overall energy generated from alternative sources.

"The development of renewable energy should not be at the expense of biodiversity. The State of Nature report showed 60 per cent of our wildlife is in decline. We cannot accept further loss of important habitats or species."

The spokesperson continued: "Natural Resources Wales have raised serious concerns about the impact of the proposed tidal lagoon in Swansea Bay on fish, particularly salmon and sea trout.

"Modelling of the impacts on fish is now recognised as unreliable and flawed. The Wildlife Trusts believe that no tidal lagoon developments should be consented until substantial research has been completed into the environmental impacts of this new technology."

Wildlife Trusts in Wales is the representative body for the six local Wildlife Trusts in Wales. Its role is to protect wildlife and wild places for future generations. Visit www.wtwales.org for more information.

'Help the hungry millions in Yemen'

CHRIS Elmore, Labour MP for Ogmore, is pressing the UK Government to do all it can to help the people of Yemen.

In the Commons, he said 40 million people in the country, more than half the population, are going hungry.

He said: "In the capital, Sana'a, residents have resorted to scavenging rubbish dumps for scraps of food."

Mr Elmore asked Foreign Office Minister Tobias Ellwood what progress he is making towards brokering a ceasefire in the country's civil war so that the Yemeni people can get the help they need.

Mr Ellwood said it is vital for the UK to gain full access to Sana'a, but that, unfortunately, it is in the hands of the Houthis rebel faction.

He said: "We are unable to utilise the airport, which would be the best way to get aid into the country, because of disagreements that are taking place.

"The sooner we can get all parties back around the table the sooner we can bring about a cessation of hostilities and get that important aid back into the country, including the capital."

GIFT CARD CHEER ON 'BLUE MONDAY'

Josephine Shirley from Porthcawl (right) receiving her £50 gift card from Tesco cashier Anne Easterbrook.

CUSTOMERS at Tesco stores in Bridgend were randomly selected every half hour to win a £10, £20 or £50 gift card on 'Blue Monday' (January 16), billed by some as 'the most depressing day of the year' due to a combination of Christmas debt, back-to-work blues and the 'winter weather'.

There were 32 lucky winners at the two stores who won a combined total of £960 and customers were also treated to 'blue' refreshments, including sweet treats and non-alcoholic cocktails.

Major dates for Bridgend Male Choir

AS well as local engagements, in support of local charities, Bridgend Male Choir (BMC) will not only be performing at the Welsh Proms in St David's Hall, Cardiff in July with Pendyrus Male Voice Choir, but also at the world famous Gothic Roman Catholic Cathedral of Santa Maria of Palma on October 27, as part of BMC's Majorca tour.

In the run up to these dates, BMC will be performing in the St David's Day concert on March 1 at Bryntirion Comprehensive School in support of the Urdd Gobaith Cymru (Bridgend committee), and on March 17 with Vocelle Ladies Choir at St Mary's Catholic Church, Bridgend, in support of St John's House Trust.

MARTIN CADOGAN, Bridgend Male Choir

'DOGMOBILE' GEARS UP FOR TOUR!

ON January 25 and 26, Dogs Trust will be raising 'pounds for hounds' at a doggy meet and greet in Talbot Green.

The charity's 'Dogmobile' will be at the Tesco store from 10am-4pm to tell about the work of Dogs Trust.

Dogmobile manager, Mal Green, explained: "The Dogmobile is a fun, 'interactive' way to help people find out more about rehoming a rescue dog and the brilliant work of Dogs Trust. While dogs are not directly rehomed from the Dogmobile, if you do find that it's puppy love after meeting our dogs, we encourage you to visit our centres to find out more about making a new best friend.

"You'll also be able to find out about the charity's fantastic 'Sponsor a Dog' scheme, how you can get your dog microchipped for free at Dogs Trust centres and how you can make a difference by volunteering at the Dogs Trust Bridgend centre."

To find out more about Dogs Trust Bridgend, visit www.dogstrust.org.uk or visit the centre at Court Colman, Pen-y-Fai, Bridgend, CF31 4NG.

The centre is open from 12pm-4pm, Thursday-Tuesday.

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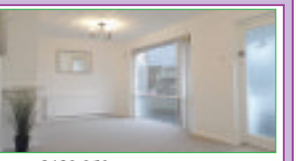
Traditional three bedroom; Entrance porch. Hallway. Lounge. Dining room. Kitchen and bathroom to the ground floor. GCH and partial UPVC DG. Enclosed forecourt and rear garden. NO CHAIN.



FOR SALE

Earl Crescent, Barry - £139,950
Three bedroom end link property. Entrance porch. Open plan living room. Kitchen. Bathroom with separate w/c. Enclosed rear garden. Property benefiting from UPVC double glazing and gas central heating. EPC rating: E.

FOR SALE

Woodlands Court, Barry - £89,950
Two double bedroom first floor apartment in the heart of Barry. Communal hallway. Entrance hallway. Living room. Kitchen/breakfast room. Bathroom. UPVC DG. GCH. NO CHAIN.

FOR SALE

Romilly Park Road - £390,000
Five bedroom semi. Entrance porch. Hallway. Three reception rooms. Three bedrooms, en suite, shower room and family bathroom. Two double bedrooms and loft space. UPVC DG . GCH. Enclosed gardens..

FOR SALE

Morel Street, Barry - £104,950
Three bedroom bay fronted property situated near the town centre. Entrance hallway. Lounge. Dining room. Kitchen. First floor shower room. UPVC DG. GCH. Enclosed rear garden. NO CHAIN.

FOR SALE

Cledwen Close, Barry - £214,950
Well presented three bedroom semi. Entrance porch. Hallway. Through lounge/dining room. Modern fitted kitchen. Conservatory. Breakfast room/office. Utility room. Modern white bathroom suite. UPVC DG and GCH. Off road parking. Garage. EPC rating: D.

FOR SALE

Unit 15 Palmers Vale Business centre - £365,000
The property is located on a secure multi-unit business centre, in easy access to Cardiff and M4 corridor. Internal area 6,000 SQ FT (557.5 sq m) with a large surfaced concrete yard that is fully enclosed with palisade fencing and two entrances. Unit comprises of internal offices and a large warehouse space.
Please call the office to speak to Angela for further information on 01446 700222.

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Park Crescent - £450 PCM
Newly refurbished shop in the West end of Barry. Retail shop front, kitchen facilities and w/c. In easy access to Cardiff and M4 corridor.

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High Street - £159,950
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Putting health and social care at the forefront of the Assembly's priorities

INVESTING in health and social care has been the key priority of the Welsh Government Budget for 2017/18.

We need to invest in social care, as well as the NHS, to ensure that when people are discharged from hospital, care services are in place either at home, or in another care setting, in order to help reduce re-admissions.

Last week, Cabinet Secretary Mark Drakeford AM opened the final budget debate in the Senedd with the announcement that a further investment of £10m would be made in social care – over and above the additional £25m announced in the draft budget in October last year.

This was welcomed by the cross-party finance committee as an important additional investment alongside the £240m uplift in the health spend in this budget.

This news was very important in relation to the launch of a consultation on the draft Dementia Strategic Action Plan for Wales announced by Cabinet Secretary Vaughan Gething.

He accompanied me on a visit to Ty Hapus in Barry before Christmas, to meet people living with or affected by dementia and to learn more about the importance of dementia-friendly services.

Ty Hapus is a wonderful facility in Barry supported by the Alzheimer's Society, and has given new opportunities and meaning to people's lives. I would like to thank all those who work in our social care sector in the Vale of Glamorgan – in care homes and in the community – for the vital and valuable work that you do.

Vaughan Gething AM stated that dementia is one of the biggest healthcare challenges our generation faces – with between 40,000 - 50,000 people in Wales currently living with dementia.

I welcome the way the Vale of Glamorgan is responding to this challenge by supporting the Dementia Friends/Dementia Supportive Communities campaigns, with voluntary groups developing initiatives such as the Memory Cafe in Dinas Powys and dementia-friendly facilities in shops, cafes and businesses.

This links to the importance of focusing on 'prevention' in our policies and services alongside our increased

GUEST COLUMN

by VALE AM JANE HUTT
(Leader of the House)

investment in health and social care. The areas for action in the draft dementia plan are now out for consultation and I am seeking responses to feed back to my colleagues in the Welsh Government.

Three of the five action points are as follows:

• Raising awareness of how to help people reduce their risk of developing dementia, or delay its onset.

• Early support and treatment for people with dementia, their carers and facilities following diagnosis.

• The availability of increased support, whether in a person's home, or in a care home.

The consultation can be accessed via the Welsh Government website: *consultations.gov.wales/consultations/draft-national-dementia-strategy.*

Another important statement was made last week by the Health Secretary on the 'New Treatment Fund' with £80m allocated over the life of this Welsh Government.

The New Treatment Fund will speed up access to new medicines, offering a real step forward where there are limited treatment options available for people suffering from life-threatening or life-limiting illnesses, such as cancers, rheumatoid arthritis, epilepsy, heart disease and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

I hope these announcements – backed by finance – show how we are continuing to make health, social care and prevention a priority.

Renowned hairdresser's demonstration

Jay Mahmood with one of the class models, Atiya Hamonda.

JAY MAHMOOD, a renowned hairdresser, took time out of his schedule to give a masterclass in cutting techniques to hair and beauty students at Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC).

The 'Global Creative Ambassador for Cutting' at hair colour company Goldwell, gave two classes for students and staff at CAVC's urbasba salon at its City Centre Campus.

Speaking of his session at CAVC, Jay said: "I'm really happy with today – I think the college does an amazing job; it's so inspiring. It's not just about giving the students a skill, the teachers are more like life mentors and life coaches.

"They genuinely care about the direction their students are going in with their careers and I very rarely see that.

"The environment is very important and this is inspiring – I am going to come away from here inspired myself. It's a fresh and really modern set-up."

LOCAL CANDIDATE QUERIES SPENDING

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Mr Thomas sent The GEM the council's spreadsheets detailing transactions from the three financial years, which run, in total, to scores of pages.

Mr Thomas highlighted a number of transactions from the documents supplied, which he queried.

These included: more than £3,000 spent on Facebook; a total of £6 spent for 'refreshments' at Bargain Booze; £960 spent on a 'beer tent'; and a booking costing £318.65 at a Haven Holiday park; there was also the purchase of plastic sword cocktail picks.

Mr Thomas said: "No doubt we are going to be told that using these cards is a fast and cost-effective method of paying suppliers efficiently, but this spending bonanza is on top of original departmental budgets.

"Taxpayers will no doubt want answers from this ailing Labour authority on why spending on these cards has almost doubled from the previous financial year.

"They would also question some of the incredible individual purchases at a time when personal budgets are tight and the Labour administration are cutting public services.

"When I received these figures I was incredulous over the volume of spending.

"I have now asked how much the authority owes in total on credit cards, how the spending is monitored and do they have a spending limit."

Other items on the spreadsheets that required explanation included: tickets and insurance for a trip to India totalling £1,583.38; flights to Lithuania for £199.90; and various instances of expenditure at the Grand Pavilion in Porthcawl for tickets and shows.

The GEM put Mr Thomas's concerns, and a sample of some of the purchases to BCBC.

Its spokesperson replied: "*The use of the purchasing card is linked to existing budgets, and is strictly controlled and monitored to prevent abuse.*

"When you look at the goods purchased in closer detail, it is apparent that the purchasing card has been used properly."

Taking some of the purchases highlighted by Mr Thomas point-by-point, the BCBC spokesperson provided explanations.

"For example, spending at Amazon was mainly related to schools and included text books, science and play resources, sensory room lighting, IT accessories, gazebos and a weather station.

"Purchases from Argos were related to projects and initiatives designed to help local people such as Just Ask Plus, Flying Start and Bridgend Safeguarding. They included items such as cot and bunk beds, a fridge, safety gates and mattresses."

The spokesperson said that the Tesco purchases related to food and were again associated with schools and projects such as Flying Start and Just Ask Plus, while Facebook spending involved advertising for things like literacy-boosting sessions at local libraries or major public consultation events.

The spokesperson continued: "Air travel tickets related to looked-after children who were repatriated with family members abroad, or in the case of tickets to India, Litchard Primary School took part in an educational exchange, which was funded by the British Council In Wales and CSC For Numeracy."

The 'plastic sword cocktail picks', said the spokesperson, were used as part of a primary school project about pirates, while the refreshments bought at Bargain Booze were for bottled water for a mathematics training event.

Of the claim that £960 was spent on a beer tent, the spokesperson responded: "It is entirely inaccurate; no such tent was purchased, but 10 tables for use at a local school were."

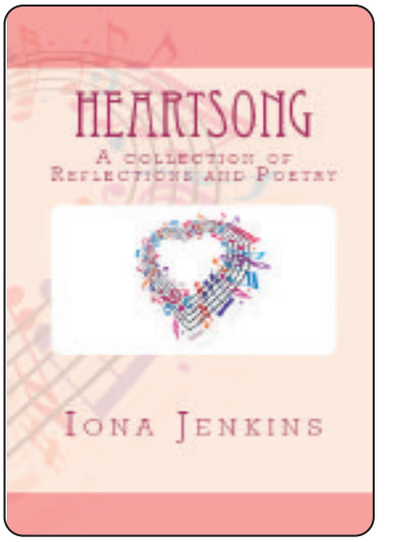
Explaining other purchases, including tickets for shows at the Grand Pavilion or caravan holidays, the spokesperson said that in all cases the expenditure was on behalf of vulnerable people who do not have the capacity to look after their own finances, and that BCBC was fully reimbursed for costs.

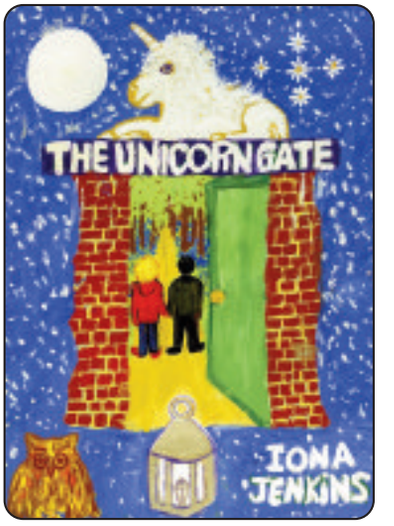
***The spokesperson concluded**: "As the figures quoted cover a three-year period, many of the purchases will have been funded by grants, and net costs in the majority of cases would have been considerably reduced once VAT had been recovered.*

"Residents can be assured that the council's use of the Welsh Purchasing Card scheme is entirely appropriate, tightly controlled and very well regulated."

Turning a page opens a door to another world

AUTHOR and poet Iona Jenkins says: "The natural world has always drawn me into its mysteries and fired my imagination."





It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that fantasy and nature, labyrinths and language, and myth and music have collided in her two published works: *The Unicorn Gate* and *Heartsong – A Collection of Reflections and Poetry*.

Iona, whose journey has taken her from childhood in a small Yorkshire village to London and now to the Vale, said: "Since my childhood, I have been inspired by landscapes.

"I walked and explored the countryside around my home in a mining village, and this is how the natural world first drew me in.

"The possibilities offered by doorways and the magical hours of dawn and twilight, those mysterious in-between times which are neither day nor night, are all inspirations for me."

During her career in London as a counsellor and psychotherapist, she describes herself as "privileged to have been a travelling companion for a variety of people from diverse backgrounds and cultures, all on their own quests through the shadow and light of complex inner landscapes.

"My clients were a mixture of children, young people and adults, all heroes in their own stories, often displaying astonishing courage in challenging personal circumstances."

Iona said that much of her creative impulse still flows from that connection to the natural world, which developed during her youth that continues to today.

"I find myself powerfully influenced by the countryside in Wales where I now live," she noted.

"There is a wealth of inspiration in the histories, legends and folk tales of these Celtic landscapes, which are more than likely sensing some kind of resonance with the Irish ancestry on my father's side.

"I enjoy writing for both children and adults, finding doorways, discovering paths and walking new landscapes, both at home and abroad, in whatever direction."

Her books are available on Amazon in both print and Kindle versions.

Boverton WI news

IN spite of the inclement weather a good number of Boverton WI members attended the January meeting, including five guests.

Our speaker for the evening was Rev Michael Wishard, who joined the Navy as a priest and in his own words 'went like a lamb to the slaughter.'

At times, this must have been both a satisfying and trying calling, but he thoroughly enjoyed his time at sea. He had a wealth of funny stories to tell that had us all laughing and an enjoyable evening followed.

Future dates for your diary: March 1 at Llantonian Hall, a fundraiser for Denman.

Llantwit Mayor Sally Hanks is having a charity music concert at St Illtud's Church on February 4. Tickets can be bought at the town council offices for £5 each and 'A Social Simple Supper' will be held to celebrate Boverton WI's birthday to be held on February 16.

We meet on the second Thursday of the month and always look forward to new members. **ED**

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• 2 reception rooms
• Sought after location

£440,000

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SSTC

• Countryside views
• 5 bedrooms
• 4 reception rooms
• Cosmetic work required

£225,000

MACKWORTH STREET, BRIDGEND
SSTC

• Mid terrace property
• New bathroom suite
• 3 bedrooms
• Private garden to rear

£97,000

BADGERS BROOK CLOSE, YSTRADOWEN
SSTC

• Semi detached property
• 3 bedrooms
• Recently redecorated
• No chain

£230,000

LLWYN NWYDOG FARMHOUSE, NR YSTRADOWEN
SSTC

• Period farmhouse
• 4 bedrooms
• Mature gardens
• Private location

£595,000

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ARLA
RICS

Celebrating 40 years of high class youth rugby at Bridgend Athletic

WHEN one of the founder members of the Athletic club, Clive Easterbrook, approached David Davison to see if he would organise the proposed new youth team for the club, nobody could even dream of the success it would achieve in the next 40 years.

David gave up refereeing to devote himself to the challenge. In those days, the club were training on the sloping council field in Bryntirion and a group of boys led by Terry Pemberton had approached the club and ensured us that they could get enough to start a team, so in season 1976/77, Bridgend Athletic Youth was formed.

Lyndon Young was appointed coach, Geoff Chinnock first aider and Terry Pemberton was captain. In their first game they were hammered 46–3 by the outstanding Maesteg Youth on the Cabbage patch (now Bridgend Athletic club track) and the Athletic ended with only 14 players as their full back had enough and walked off at half-time!

Fortunately morale was not affected. After a 7-7 draw with Caerphilly in the fourth game, their first win came away at Tondu 12–14 in game seven.

The record in the first season was P26, W9, D1, L16, but in the second year, with the late Lino LaForges as captain, we won 15 games and in year three we won the District League Cup and Tries Trophy Shield, with our present head coach John Apsee as vice-captain.

David stayed with the youth for seven years but Phil Rees, who had always helped out with the coaching, become the main man for the next 30, with outstanding help from many others particularly Steve Pilliner, Glyn Rees, Keith Thomas, Terry Coles, Paul Hearne, Mark Davies, Anthony Woodwood, Steve Penry-Ellis, Ian Greenman, and Tony Bennett – down to our present outstanding youth set up of Mark Phillips, Lee Grabham, John Doherty, Kevin Gamble and Keith Hobby, who organise our two youth teams.

The club have won the Webb Ellis Youth final twice, in 2007 and 2009, and also been runners-up, and also won the RAF Youth League final in 2009, all at the Millennium Stadium.

The youth have won the Ospreys A league four times and hopefully again this season, as so far they are unbeaten. They have won the District Cup at least 12 times, and also numerous sevens tournaments.

Outstanding players produced include; Lee Byrne (Lions and Wales); Rhys Webb, Scott Baldwin, Matthew Morgan (all Wales), John Apsee (Wales B); Nicky Griffiths, Luke Morgan, Lloyd Evans (all Wales sevens); Steve Lyons, Dan Apsee, Rhodri Apsee (Malta); Neil Thomas (Oman); Steve Groom, Nigel Dennis, Huw Hathaway, Mike Miller, Kyle Coulter (Wales District internationals).

Wales under-18 internationals - Malcolm Hall, Paul Jones, Simon Cole, Tom Hearne, Lloyd Ryland, Dan Apsee, Nicky Griffiths, Andrew Kingdom, Jonathan Jones, Rhys Webb, H Molitika, Lee Sims, Kyle Maiden, Tom Williams, Jack Shaw, Lloyd Peers (now Ashley), Tom Habberfield, Matthew Morgan and Evan Yardley; Tom Hearne, Paul Jones and Nicky Griffiths also went on to represent Wales at under-21 level.

Wales under-16 representative honours were also won by Chris Davies, Dean Griffiths, Simon Cole, Ben Collins, Ryan Evans, and Lewis Kirby.

Many players have gone on to play regional rugby and Premiership Rugby, mainly for the Ospreys and Bridgend RFC, but also for Celtic Warriors, Scarlets, Dragons, Cardiff Blues, Swansea, Aberavon, Llanelli, Maesteg, Bedwas and Neath.

The first 40 years after humble beginnings have been unbelievingly successful - here's to the next 40!

To commemorate the occasion there was a special fixture played last on January 11 against a Bridgend and District youth side, which the Athletic Youth won 27-8 in a highly entertaining game, watched by a decent-sized crowd at the Bridgend Ford Brewery Field.

AB

History made as Phoenix earn win

Amy Morgan (All pictures by Julie Hancock).

Leanne Burnell.

Lauren Atkins.

THIS was a red letter day in the history of Pencoed Phoenix when, for the first time since their formation in April 2010, they were able to field three eligible players from their talented under-18 squad.

The occasion did not disappoint with Phoenix reversing a September league defeat at Ynysbwl.

In a scoreless first half Phoenix, playing into a stiff breeze dominated matters territorially but a combination of missed opportunities and a strong Ynysbwl scrum brought about parity at the interval.

The home side then made a few positional changes and after absorbing early second half pressur, Phoenix got their opening try,

Rhianydd Morgan and Charlotte Mundy handlied well before centre Laura Aitken straightened onto the pass and despite the attention of several Ynysbwl defenders, crashed over.

The visitors' response was immediate, driving play from the restart saw Sam Galea level matters at 5-5.

Phoenix replacements Becca Pope and Caitlin Jones were by now having a galvanizing effect on the Phoenix scrummage and debutant Jones soon made her presence felt in the loose, embarking on what proved to be an unstoppable run in the visitors' 22 before crashing over under the posts, and it seemed ages before the match official, peering through the mass of bodies, awarded young Jones the touchdown, much to the delight of her team mates.

Phoenix then increased their lead, a kick and chase from Aitken saw her centre partner Jade Mullen catch the Ynysbwl full back in possession and quick recycled ball saw back row forward Amy Morgan fend off several defenders to score.

With the Phoenix pack now in the ascendancy at the scrummage, putting their dangerous backs onto the front foot, the bonus point try was secured in the final minutes, Morgan breaking with the ball in two hands to deceive the desperate visitors defence in a 30-metre run before feeding Leanne Burnell, and the full-back's pace and running skills did the rest to race over.

Phoenix can reflect on a hard-fought 20-5 victory in which they had finished strongly in the final quarter, and all three debutants - Megan Griffiths, Caitlin Jones, and Caitlin Smith - will no doubt add to the senior Phoenix squad strength over the seasons ahead.

Post-match, Abi Jones and Naomi Davies were chosen by Phoenix as best Ynysbwl players, with Amy Stevens and Caitlin Jones chosen best Phoenix players by their opponents.

This Sunday Phoenix travel to Ynysddu for their next National League Division 1 match.

TR

New hoodies for under-13s

PORTHCAWL RFC under-13s would like to sincerely thank Ancient Briton owners Andrew and Kristina, as well as the regular Sunday quizzers for donating the proceeds of recent events to buy the team a set of hoodies for training.

The boys were delighted to pop along to the Brit to collect the hoodies and really looked the part this weekend when they played Tata Steel.

The under-13s have had a very successful season, winning all but one game, testament to their commitment to training and their determination.

The team are hoping to tour later this year to end a wonderful season and it's fantastic to see the boys' fitness and confidence develop as they reach their teenage years.

Thanks again to all those involved with the quiz and to the boys for such continued effort and enthusiasm.

KM

Bridgend Bridge Club

THE results for recent events at Bridgend Bridge Club are:

Wednesday, January 11, British Simultaneous Pairs: First, Tony Ratcliff and Julian Pottage; Second: Steve Burgoyne and Tony Disley; Third, Mike Best and David Birt. The winners on handicap were Steve Burgoyne and Tony Disley.

Thursday, January 12: First: Teresa Griffiths and Leila Hagan; Second: Mike Williams and Gareth Jenkins; Third: David Newman and Stuart Davies. The winners on handicap were Teresa Griffiths and Leila Hagan.

Friday, January 13, North/South: First: Marjorie Morris and Bill Turner; Second: Jane Brook and Wendy Williams; Third: Chris Rawlings and Ann Fox. The winners on handicap were Marjorie Morris and Bill Turner.

Friday, January 13, East/West: First: Geoff Barnes and John Beard; Second: David Bowen and David Crompton; Third: Linda Pinnock and Jenny Vaughan. The winners on handicap were Colin Lewis and John Moore.

Regular club nights take place on Wednesday and Friday evenings at Nolton Church Hall. Play is scheduled to begin at 7pm, so it helps if players arrive at least 10 minutes early.

On Thursday afternoons at 2pm, also at Nolton Church Hall there is a gentle bridge session. Master points are awarded, but it remains a relaxed occasion where players enjoy their bridge.

TG

Bulls' win

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

With three minutes to go, Jordan Hylton made a clean break, sprinting 60 metres, outrunning his markers, collapsing with the ball under the sticks with Green again adding the extras to make it 24-24.

However, Bridgend weren't finished yet and the last move of the game saw Ansen waltz round the students' defence for the winner.

University of South Wales and Cardiff Met now go back for the second half of the student league but for Bridgend, it's the Ladbrokes Challenge Cup first round on Saturday, January 28, at New River Stadium in London when they take on London Chargers (kick-off 1pm) in the first of a triple header 'London Clash 2017'.

Bridgend-born Ben Evans is one of five Welsh internationals now playing for London Broncos. The former Brynteg Comprehensive School pupil is joined by fellow full Welsh internationals Elliot Kear, Rhys Williams, Dalton Grant and Michael Channing in the squad.

Bridgend's London date on January 28 concludes at 5pm with another Challenge Cup first round game with Wests Warriors taking on the Great Britain Police Force.

Tickets to all three games cost just £10 and are available from http://www.londonbroncosrl.com/.

IG

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(Figures correct as of April 2016)

Family Notices

FAIRCHILD
Paul
(of Sarn, formerly of Llantwit Major)

Suddenly at home on January 4. Loving husband, father, and son of Jean and the late Richard.

Paul will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.

Funeral service at Coychurch Crematorium on Monday, January 23 at 3.45pm. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to Parkinson's UK.

CASEY
Vince

On January 9 at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Vince of Llantwit Major. Dearly loved husband of Trish, and who will be sadly missed by family and friends.

Resting at W.A. Brown & Son, College Street, Llantwit Major, until the funeral service in Coychurch Crematorium on Monday, January 23 at 10.30am. Family flowers only but donations may be made to Marie Curie Cancer Care c/o the funeral home.

PUDNER
Basil

Peacefully on 13th January 2017, Basil, aged 92 years, beloved husband of the late Tove, much loved dad of David and Karen.

Basil will be sadly missed by all his family friends.

Resting at A.G. Adams Funeralcare until the service in the Chapel of Rest on Tuesday, 31st January 2017 at 11am, followed by interment at Barry Cemetery. Flowers may be sent to the funeral home.

MURRAY
Henry (Harry)

Suddenly after a short illness, Harry of Llantwit Major. Dearly loved husband of Margaret and a much loved father of Janet, Loretta and the late Margaret, a loving granddad to Miranda, Natalie, Melissa, Kirsty, Piers and Justine.

Resting at W.A. Brown & Son, College Street, Llantwit Major until the funeral service in Coychurch Crematorium on Wednesday, 25 January 2017 at 1.15pm. Family flowers only, but donations may be made to Air Ambulance c/o the Funeral Home (cheques only please).

PERRY
William Colin

Suddenly but peacefully on January 8 at home, Colin, aged 92 years, of St Osyth's Court, Barry. Beloved husband of the late Jean. A loved father of Linda, David, Andrew and father-in-law of Jen and Yvonne. Special papa to all of his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Colin will be sadly missed by all of his family and friends.

Resting at A.G. Adams Funeralcare, Gladstone Road, Barry, until the funeral on Monday, January 30. Service at All Saints church, Barry at 12noon, followed by cremation at Cardiff & Glamorgan crematorium, Port Road East, Barry. Family flowers only, if desired, donations may be handed to the funeral director after the funeral for Ty Hafan, The Childrens Hospice in Wales.

YOUNG-SMITH
Mary

Peacefully on January 9 at Llandough Hospital, Mary, aged 96 years, sadly passed away.

She will be so dearly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Mary is in the care of Lyndsay Ellis @ The Vale Funeral Service, 181 Court Road, Barry until a service to celebrate her life to be held at St Mary's Church, Holton Road, Barry on Monday, January 23 at 11am, followed by cremation at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry.

Family floral tributes only please - donations, if desired, may be made at her service to support The Alzheimer's Society.

Further enquiries to 01446 407962

FERNYHOUGH
Ian

Peacefully at home on 15th January with his family at his side. Beloved husband of Margaret, dearly loved father and father-in-law of Jackie and Mike, Sally-Anne and Andrew. Much loved grandpa of Jamie, Angharad and Rebecca.

Friends of Ian are welcome to attend his funeral service, which will be held on Friday, 27th January at 10.45am at St John the Baptist Church, Llanblethian, and Coychurch Crematorium at 12 noon. Family flowers only. Grateful thanks for the care and support from Marie Curie Hospice and the district nurses.

Donations, if desired, to Marie Curie Hospice, Bridgeman Road, Penarth, CF64 3YR or Ty Hafan Hospice, Hayes Road, Sully, CF64 5XX.

RUSSELL
Patricia Mary (Née Akers)

Peacefully on January 10th at the University Hospital of Wales - Patricia, beloved wife of the late Freddy.

Much loved mum and nan who will be sadly missed.

Funeral service to take place on Tuesday, 31st January at St Helens RC Church, Barry at 12pm, followed by cremation at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, may be made at the service to support Multiple Sclerosis Society in memory of Patricia.

HOLLEY
Pauline Elizabeth
(née Pearson)

Peacefully at home on 10 January 2017, Pauline, aged 86 years, beloved wife of the late Terry, much loved mum of Janice and son-in-law Alan. Cherished nan to Rhys, Holly and their partners Rhiannon and Craig, loved Nana Pauline to Draig, Ingrid, Alex and James.

Pauline will be sadly missed by all her family and friends.

Resting at A.G. Adams Funeralcare until the service at St David's Methodist Church on Friday, 27 January 2017 at 1pm, followed by interment at Barry Cemetery. No flowers by request, donations in lieu, if so desired, for The RNLI c/o the funeral director.

RICHARDSON
May Elizabeth
(of Crossways Street, Barry)

Peacefully passed away on Saturday, 14 January.

Funeral service at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry on Friday, 27 January at 12pm. Family flowers only. Donations to Marie Curie on the day.

WILLIAMS
Patricia Anne (Pat)

The family wish to announce the sad passing of Pat on January 6th at Llandough Hospital. Wife to the late Allan Williams (ACW), a much loved mum of David, Noreen, Paul, Gail, the late Michael and their families.

Cherished nan to her grandchildren and an adored ma to her great grandchildren.

Pat will be greatly missed by all her family and many friends.

Resting at The Vale Funeral Service, 181 Court Road, Barry until her service at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Port Road, Barry on Friday, 27th January at 2pm.

Family floral tributes only - donations if desired may be made at the service or via Pat's online tribute page www.valefuneralservice.co.uk where you are also welcome to leave your personal messages and memories.

All donations received to support Arthritis Research. Family request formal attire be worn, but with something colourful (no black ties).

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Family Notices

ROBSON

Charles William (Robbie)

Peacefully on 5 January at the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff, Robbie, aged 94 years, of Barry. Father of Carole, Byron, Martin and father-in-law of John and Jackie. Grandfather of all his grandchildren.

Robbie will be greatly missed by all of his family and friends.

Resting at A.G. Adams & Son Funeralcare, Gladstone Road, Barry, until the funeral on Thursday, 26 January. Service and committal at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium, Port Road East, Barry, where family and friends please meet 1pm.

WALKER

William (Billy)

After a short illness on 12th January 2017, Billy, aged 73 years, beloved husband of the late Lynette, dearly loved father of Colin, John and Debbie. Much loved grandfather of Ceri, Lauren, Samantha and Mathew, great grandfather of Nevaeh, Mia, Cory, Eli and Callum.

Resting at A.G. Adams Funeralcare until the service in the Chapel of Rest on Monday, 30th January 2017 at 10am, followed by committal at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium. Family flowers only, donations in lieu, if so desired, for Dementia UK c/o the funeral director.

THOMAS

Enid Margaret

Enid, peacefully at home with loving care, aged 86. Beloved wife of the late Robert, much loved mother of Kay, Sally and Andrew, and dear mother-in-law of John, John and Lynne. A devoted grandmother to her 11 grandchildren and four great grandchildren, all of whom adored her.

Funeral service at Ramoth United Free Church, Cowbridge at 1.45pm on Tuesday, 31st January, 2017, immediately followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium at 3.15pm. No flowers. If desired, donations to Barnados c/o J W James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhoose, CF62 3DZ.

THOMAS

Elgiva (Née Young)

(Formerly of St Hilary)

Peacefully at home near Aberystwyth on Saturday, 14 January. Widow of the late Alan Thomas, mother of Guy and Alicia, mother-in-law to Pauline and Charles, grandmother of Sebastian and Llewelyn and great grandmother of Noah.

For further details of funeral arrangements please contact C. Trevor Evans on 01970 820013.

Birthday

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Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE
LICENSING ACT 2003

To whom it may concern:
I ,**Trevor Howard,** do hereby give notice of an application to the Vale of Glamorgan Council Licensing Authority for the grant of a new premises licence at the address **150 Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4HL**.

This to include the sale of alcohol
Sun - Sat 07:00 - 01:00 Opening
Sun - Sat 07:00 - 01:30 Regulated Entertainment
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Sun - Sat 23:00 - 01:00 Plus non-standard timings applied.

Any person wishing to make representations to this application may do so by writing to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Licensing Department, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU. Not later than 28 days after the date of this notice (as below). Representations received after this date will not be considered.
It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with this application, the maximum fine on summary conviction being £5,000.
SIGNED: **Trevor Howard**
DATE: **19.01.17**

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Barry Library staff at their 10-year anniversary celebrations were joined by Vale Council Leader Neil Moore (left).

Barry Library celebrates a decade of success

MEMBERS of the public joined library staff and others to mark the 10th anniversary of Barry Library with a variety of events last weekend.

On Friday, old photographs of Barry were on show, there was a photographic challenge and a display of the most borrowed books, while people had the opportunity to sign up for 'colouring', crochet and reading groups.

A day later, storytellers entertained visitors, who could also attend a family history 'drop-in surgery' and enjoy craft-making, while there was a performance from Barry Male Voice Choir.

There was also a host of other activities taking place across the two days.

Vale Council Leader Neil Moore was among those taking part.

He said: "I can't believe it's been 10 years, because I remember vividly the day we opened the library and there are celebration pictures on the walls here today to remind us of what the library and old council offices looked like through the ages.

"I think it's a wonderful place to visit and now the learning centre upstairs only adds to the experience that everyone has.

"There are photographs of when this place was boarded up. I remember it very well, because I was working in Holton Road, and I watched the new civic offices being built, which resulted in this building closing down.

"I also remember coming here with my daughter when she was three years old, who is now old enough to have her own child and protesting about the demise of the building.

"We wanted this place open not for political gain, but to ensure the building was brought back into community use. We said "you can't just leave an iconic building like this empty!"

"I recall the disagreements we had back then. As Max Boyce used to say 'the pitheads baths is a supermarket now,' and we nearly had a supermarket here, too.

"It was only the tenacity of some of us at the council and like-minded people from the community that prevented that happening. This facility is testament to people working together to make something a success.

"This building has become iconic so all I can say is *'thank you to all the staff, you've done an amazing job'*. I'd also like to thank the library members and other visitors who borrow books, CDs, DVDs and make use of all the facilities on offer. Thank you to everyone, without you it wouldn't be a success."

Coun Lis Burnett, Vale deputy leader, said: "The pace of change in our lives has been dramatic and sometimes it's not comfortable. Now, an awful lot of information is consumed digitally and people are just as likely to read their newspapers or novels on buses on their way to work or in coffee shops, and people panic if they misplace their smartphone.

"However, that doesn't mean that libraries have become less important. Our libraries are changing and if we look at Barry Library, just in the last few years, with all the amazing activities, there's always something going on.

"As a council, if we're going to build strong communities with bright futures, which is what our corporate vision is, I'd argue that libraries are even more important. They need to be a focal point within our communities.

"Our libraries are constantly evolving to meet the needs of modern lives, but the one thing that doesn't change is the commitment, creativity and absolute passion of our staff.

"That is the one constant within the libraries. I'd like to add my thanks to that of the Leader's, to all the staff who work so hard.

"Now we've seen the addition of the learning centre, access to IT facilities, the imminent arrival of increased opening hours, hopefully more and more people will use the library and realise just what an amazing resource it is."

First female Bishop in Wales to be ordained on Saturday

HISTORY will be made on Saturday when Wales' first female bishop is consecrated at Llandaff Cathedral.

Rev Canon Joanna Penberthy.

Reverend Canon Joanna Penberthy was elected as the 129th Bishop of St David's in Pembrokeshire by members of the Electoral College in November.

It was the first opportunity for a woman to be elected as a bishop following the Church's decision in 2013 to enable the ordination of female bishops.

She will be consecrated by the Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan, with the five other Welsh bishops, and the Archbishop will give the address.

Dr Morgan, who retires on January 31 said: "This is an historic occasion for the Church in Wales, as well as being a hugely significant moment for Canon Joanna. It is marvellous that it is possible for us to appoint women as well as men to all three Orders of ministry and to regard that as now being the norm.

"What matters is not gender, but suitability, character, gifts – and that was why Joanna was elected as bishop.

"I hope everyone will celebrate with us and support Joanna and pray for her as she embarks on this next stage in her ministry."

Canon Jo, who was previously Rector of Glan Ithon in the diocese of Swansea and Brecon, said: "While being made Bishop is awe inspiring, I am very much looking forward to joining the people of St David's diocese, as we seek to live out and share our faith in the risen Christ."

The consecration service, which is ticket only due to space restrictions, starts at 11am and Bishop Joanna will be enthroned at St David's Cathedral on February 11.

Born in Swansea, she grew up in Cardiff and was educated at Cardiff High School and Newnham College, Cambridge. She trained for the ministry at St John's College, Nottingham and Cranmer Hall, Durham.

Made a deaconess in 1984 and ordained as a deacon in 1987 Canon Jo was among the first women ordained as priests in Wales in 1997.

She is married to Reverend Adrian Penberthy and they have four grown-up children and one grandchild. Her interests include quantum physics (currently studying for a PhD), reading and bird-watching.

Work to start on road junction?

THE Vale Council is to consult on a proposal to install double yellow lines at the junction of Court Road and Chilcote Street in Barry to improve visibility and make the junction safer for both pedestrians and vehicles.

The scheme is backed by Coun Richard Bertin (Court ward) who said: "This proposal will make this junction much safer and will reduce the potential for any future accidents at this spot."

How the phenomenal growth of Barry attracted new professions to the town

LOCAL historian LAURIE OWEN is fascinated by the history of Barry – in particular the remarkable growth in population when the docks were built.

In this installment, he looks at how one business grew, in response to the increasing numbers of residents.

Part 1: New cemetery, 1889

After the death of Prince Albert in 1861, it was widely reported that people had become more interested in the whole aspect of death and even the poorest saved their pennies for a proper send-off.

WORK began on building Barry Docks in 1884, and with 3,000 'navvies' and other trades working day and night, the Burial Board realised that more space was urgently needed because Merthyr Dovan and Cadoxton churchyards were full, with little space at St Nicholas Church.

So in 1889 the United Parishes of Cadoxton, Barry and Merthyr Dovan opened the New Cemetery, at a cost of £800 to accommodate 2,000 graves. Over the next few years, they paid £667 for a further five acres of land and then 10 years later, borrowed £5,500 for another 15 acres, proving their early decision to have been well-founded.

In 1892 Somerset man Frank Small of 13 Romilly Road, a master builder with a good record, erected the chapel in the new cemetery for £980. It was recorded that various denominations now wanted their own areas and in 1897, after some controversy, the Bishop of Llandaff consecrated a portion of land declaring it "Church of England property".

In 1890, the *Barry Dock News* printed a strongly-worded letter from Gertrude Jenner of the Wenvoe Castle Estate regarding the initial purchase of some of their land for the cemetery, complaining that she had not been informed, yet an 1889 deed of conveyance for purchase of the said land for £400 should surely have explained that to her.

This lady was often in the news and even judges at the High Court in London were well acquainted with her.

In financial affairs, the Burial Board had to decide whether to reduce the cost of burials of stillborn babies and children under 12 months old, from six to five shillings. The former could be placed in a common grave but the latter needed a full grave and as there were many of the latter dying, the loss of revenue would be considerable.

At another meeting it was agreed that graves had to be a depth of nine feet, which could hold three bodies with one foot between them and still allow three feet below the surface. Although these reports may seem harsh through 21st century eyes, the numbers of people now living and dying in the town brought up issues which the authorities had not needed to discuss before.

An article in 1893 offered hope of better times, when a steady decrease in the number of paupers in south Wales was announced. In 1870 there were 44 paupers per 1,000 inhabitants but by 1893 this number was down to 23, with special mention given to the increase in Friendly Societies.

The annual records of Dr George Neale the first Medical Officer of Health, appointed in 1888, showed that the population increased from 500 before work on the docks began to 10,500 when they opened five years later, increasing to an astonishing 31,436 by 1899.

Over the period from 1888 to 1899, the number of children who died before their 15th birthday increased gradually from 14 each year to 339, making a total of 2,097 young people.

In Charles Dickens' era, half of all inmates in the workhouse were children, but thankfully towards the late 1890s there was a movement to open 'scattered or cottage homes', to separate the child paupers from the adults. These consisted of single homes or a group on a site with a school, church and sports nearby, with a 'foster mother' to supervise and look after them.

They generally had a uniform and led a disciplined life but they were given basic schooling, with the boys learning a trade and the girls prepared for domestic service.

In 1899 it was reported by the Friendly Societies and the Barry Nursing Association that the housing of 'indoor' pauper children cost 7/6d per head per week.

In 1902 the Board of Guardians opened two scattered homes at 51 and 53 Kenilworth Road, near to schools and churches, to house 24 children with Miss Robins and Miss Townsend as foster mothers. This brought the total now to 22 homes caring for 288 children and it was hoped that the neighbours would play their part in helping these youngsters to settle in.

This whole experience of dealing with many more deaths not only led to the introduction of new undertakers, but it also alerted some young men that there would be a need for sculptors, with so many people now able to afford to honour their dead family members.

Frederick Thomas Mossford (1867-1949) was born in Crewe and was destined to be a sculptor from an early age, as his father William had been a master mason employer since the 1860s.

Frederick married Lucy Annie Fairbairn in 1887 and together with son Joseph, in 1891 they were living in Crewe with his widowed mother-in-law Ellen and her son and daughter Frank and Clara.

He was by now a stonemason, but tragedy struck within weeks of the census, when his young wife Lucy died at just 29 years of age.

Two years later Frederick married Lucy's younger sister Clara Elle and moved to Newbury, Berkshire where they had their first son Norman. To enhance his knowledge of his trade and learn new ideas, the next five years were spent in America, with Phyllis, Dorothy and Frank being born in Oregon, Carson City and Reno, Nevada, before returning to Newtown, Montgomeryshire by 1901.

In 1903, this man of means came bounding into Barry with a bang by means of an advert in the *Barry Dock News*, which informed the public that he was now the owner of the business of sculptor Thomas Lloyd, whose works were opposite the cemetery.

With an impressive picture of his site in Cardiff, he announced that the Mossford name was known for its work as monumental masons for over a century and his motto was: 'Best of material, beauty, symmetry and appropriate design with most artistic carving'.

As soon as the family moved into their new home, the couple engaged in the social and commercial activity in the town. Clara organised a Christmas charity in December 1905 asking for private donations to be sent to their home at 'Bella Vista', Tynewydd Road, with the money to be given to 'deserving causes'.

To encourage citizens, their contributions would be revealed in the *Barry Dock News* and she gave a list of some early donors, beginning with Mr/Mrs Mossford £20, Culley's Hotel and HR Paul one guinea each, with amounts lessening as the list continued.

One of Frederick's first assignments was to construct the memorial stone, made of Sicilian marble, for the new Masonic Hall in Broad Street. In 1905 Bro Mossford presented his work to Lord Llangattock for the laying ceremony in front of the many honoured guests and members.

Two years later he donated a drinking fountain with a trough for the dogs made of granite from the area around Balmoral Castle, which would go in front of the new public offices in Holton Road. On this occasion, he received glowing tributes as the originator of his kind of work in the area and built up one of the largest businesses in Wales, receiving orders from 'John O'Groats to the Isle of Wight'.

Other gifts would include a handsome baptismal font to St Helen's Catholic Church and it surely came as no surprise when he was elected a councillor, working on several committees in the town.

In 1907, he was privileged to preside over the annual meeting of the National Association of Monumental Masons and Sculptors of Great Britain, which was held in London.

The following year he was chairman of the local Conservative Association and the Chrysanthemum Society, and records show he was a keen billiards player.

The couple had arrived from Newtown with seven children, setting up home at Bella Vista, Tynewydd Road; then quickly added another two sons and daughters, so that by the census of 1911 they certainly needed a young servant to manage the children, aged from one to 17.

A 1916 story in the press under the heading 'Mrs Grundy's Jottings', described how son Frank had been in active service for almost two years and was still only 17, and how two other sons were also in the army, as well as 14 employees.

When Frederick died in 1949 at Newport Road, Cardiff he left his estate to sons Norman and Clive who, as sculptors, would surely have been running the business.

James Payne (1886-1949) was born in Cardiff and following the death of his mother Harriet in 1900, was living with his father Arthur a year later at 36 Jewel Street.

Arthur was a coal trimmer with three children: James, Charles and Gladys, and being recently widowed had a young domestic servant living with them.

In 1902 Arthur married a Mary Louisa Davies and they had a daughter, Elsie May, three years later. James married Margaret Effie Vincent in 1909 and two years later they were still at Jewel Street with baby Edith Harriet and sharing the home with Arthur and his new family.

With the extra responsibility, James made the bold decision to set up his own business as a monumental mason/sculptor at just 23 years of age. His only real competitor was Frederick Mossford, who as we have seen had already made his reputation in town, so James embarked on a series of press adverts for the whole of 1909 and subsequent years.

The previous year, James had been entrusted to erect the Italian grey granite sarcophagus in Porthkerry churchyard in memory of Lord and Lady Romilly, which incidentally can still be seen today. This surely spoke volumes for the quality of his work and would have been a great boost to the launch of his business.

Initially his works were in Lower Morel Street before moving to a better site on the junction of Cemetery/Barry Road. An interesting story told how in 1922, the Barry sculptor John Payne restored the base of a medieval cross in Cadoxton churchyard and it was this son who was listed in Kelly's 1923 directory as a sculptor at 40 Jewel Street.

When James died in hospital in 1949, he was still living at number 36 Jewel Street.

William Evans (1894-unknown) was born in Barry to parents Thomas and Elizabeth, who came to 74 Station Street from the Rhondda by 1891.

His father was a coal trimmer and by 1901 they were living at 63 Kingsland Crescent with his elder brothers David and Jenkin and Thomas's cousin and niece Moses and Sarah David.

At the age of 17 William was an apprentice sculptor, quite possibly with either Frederick Mossford or James Payne, but here was another young man with ambition, because just four years later he was trading as 'W Evans & Co' at 21 years of age, with his works just outside the cemetery gates.

A year prior to this, at the opening of the new enlarged chapel for the Tabernacle Welsh Congregational he donated a fine white marble tablet, made in his leisure time. As a young member, it was a fine gesture and would have done no harm to his reputation.

Unfortunately for William, the war interrupted his plans and he was enlisted for several years before returning in 1919 to continue building his fledgling business. His continual series of adverts told readers that he was back, having been discharged from HM Forces, and he was eager to resume the good work.

He began by designing and erecting two tablets in memory of fallen comrades, for the Bethel Baptist and the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist chapels, which were described as being of 'excellent design and workmanship'.

W Evans & Co were still at Cemetery Road in 1923.

It was interesting that in 1909, when James Payne began his extensive advertising campaign listing his full details, Frederick's advert just said 'FT Mossford, Sculptor', emphasising to everyone that "you know who I am, where I am and what I do".

Part 2 will feature the men who set up as undertakers to satisfy the demand and were required to tender each year for the burial of the 'pauper children' at the cheapest price.

Transfer date for Community Library

RHOOSE Community Library is registered with the Charity Commission and was set up in readiness to take over the running of Rhoose Library.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council had previously decided that it would be closed unless a community group was ready to take over the library.

Legal actions have been mounted to prevent the Vale Council going forward with their plans in the hope that they would continue to provide a council-run library service in Rhoose.

Unfortunately, legal action has failed, which means the only realistic option to maintain a library in Rhoose is for it to be transferred to the Rhoose Community Library.

A dedicated team of people have volunteered their time and effort in preparing to be ready for this outcome.

Trustees of the Rhoose Community Library and the Vale Council have agreed that the transfer date will be February 1.

Both parties will enter into a 99-year lease for a peppercorn rent and a Service Level agreement setting out what is expected of them.

"We already have over 20 trained and committed volunteers who are already helping at the library and we have the support of a peripatetic librarian employed by the Vale Council for 15 hours a week.

"I am very proud of all those people who have worked hard to prepare and put us in the position to maintain a library for Rhoose.

"We want to make Rhoose Community Library a success and plan to expand the current services offered," said Coun Jeff James, chairman of the trustees.

MP'S CALL OVER DENTAL CONCERNS IN BARRY

CONCERN over shortage of dental provision in Barry has prompted Vale MP Alun Cairns to write to the Cardiff and Vale Health board.

He has asked for NHS dental provision, "measured in 'Units of Dental Administration' or UDAs, to be shared among a greater number of practices to maximise capacity."

Mr Cairns had asked local people to get in touch with him on their experiences of trying to find an NHS dentist and flagged this up to the health board.

He took up the issue following a visit to the new Waterfront Dental Surgery in Barry.

Mr Cairns said: "The practitioner, Dr Price, explained that there is a lack of capacity in Barry's established dental surgeries for treatment on the NHS because these surgeries are stretched to capacity with NHS and private patients.

"He believes that a greater number of NHS patients could be treated across Barry if NHS treatment options were available in a greater number of practices."

Dr Price said, "We have been very busy since opening the new practice in Barry, there is great local demand for dental services here. There is also strong demand for treatment on the NHS, which we would love to provide but are currently prevented from doing so.

"There is a lack of capacity for NHS dental treatment in Barry and we want to be part of the solution and help and many local people as possible."

Helen joins the team at Castleland

Last week Eileen Moore handed over the reins at Castleland Community Centre to Helen Jones (right) who becomes the new manager of the Drop In Centre Development Trust. The centre is a key part of the local community, providing support for local residents and hosting lots of local groups and charities. If people would like more information about the facilities available, including use of the conference rooms or IT suite, they can contact Helen on 01446 701285; or email castleland@dicdevelopmenttrust.com

Winter cricket training starts

COWBRIDGE Cricket Club starts winter training on Wednesday, January 25.

The training will run for 10 sessions and will be held in the sports hall at Cowbridge Comprehensive School. The sessions will provide juniors with group and individual coaching and are run by England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) qualified and DBS checked head and support coaches.

The club welcomes both boys and girls of all abilities. No previous experience of cricket is required.

Age groups are as follows: Under-9s – school years 3–4 inclusive. Year-2 on application, Wednesdays 5.30pm–6.30pm;

Under-11s – school years 5–6 inclusive. Wednesdays 6.30pm–7.30pm;

Under-13s – school years 7–8 inclusive. Wednesdays 7.30pm–8.30pm;

Under-15s – school years 9–10 inclusive. Wednesdays 8.30pm–9.30pm;

Under-17s – school years 11–13 inclusive. Wednesdays 8.30pm–9.30 pm.

Please note there will be no sessions during the February half-term or the Easter holiday break. The cost for each of these sessions will be £4 per person, per session.

During the playing season, the club will have teams playing at all age groups from under-9s through to under-19s. The club also hopes to offer a cricket program for four to seven year olds under a new initiative being rolled out by the ECB.

If anyone is interested in knowing more or would like to join the winter training, contact the junior co-ordinator, Sara Russell on 07806 483722.

Any adults wishing to join the club, contact Jon Smart on 07710 088581 or email jonathansmart1@btinternet.com. Senior winter nets will take place at dates to be advised.

Barry chess club's busy week

THIS week we were busier with players from the Barry Chess Club taking part in the South Wales New Year Congress, the Shropshire Open and also two matches in the East Glamorgan Chess league.

Both the Congress and the Open were events played over Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday with five rounds of play.

In the Shropshire Open Lee Davis took part. Whilst he only earned two points from his five games he did manage a draw against FM Andrew Horton who is rated at 2394 in the first round.

In the Congress there were a quite a few Barry players taking part. Mark and Tom Cooke played in the Major Section while Nigel Ralphs, Sam Jukes, Matthew Parry and Stephen Bonutto took part in the Open Section.

Amazingly Mark, Sam and Matthew all ended the weekend with 2.5 points to finish in mid table in their respective sections.

Stephen Bonutto was one of the lower ranked players in the Open Section so to claim three draws and earn a further 11 rating points was no mean feat.

Nigel finished with three wins, a draw and a bye to earn four points.

He finished second in the Open Section behind Cardiff's Grzorz Toczek who won all 5 of his matches.

Tom also earned four points in the Major Section. Like Nigel he managed three wins, a draw and a bye. This meant he also finished as runner-up behind another Cardiff player, Ed Donovan who ended up with 4.5 points, a very respectable return for the Barry club.

In the league the Barry Bosons in division 1 played the Caerphilly Kings who were the only unbeaten team in all three divisions, were being the operative word as with wins for Matthew Parry and Matthew Davies supported by draws from Steve Cunliffe and Dave Parsons gave us a 3-2 victory.

Rhys Steele lost his 100 per cent record and was our only loser playing Ioan Rees.

In division 4 the Barry Gambits played the Cardiff Cavaliers. The Cavaliers had only picked up three draws from their first eight matches until now when they won the match by a score of 3.5-1.5. Our points came from a draw by Martin Ricketts and a win for John Rees.

Whilst the Quarks did not play this week, two of their relegation rivals met with the Nelson Griffins beating the St John's Neutrinos by a whitewash of 5-0.

This margin of victory has pushed the Griffins into the promotion race. The Quarks are 4.5 points from safety so need to earn some good victories soon.

The Barry Chess Club meets at 7.30pm each Monday at the West End Club. St. Nicholas Road, Barry CF62 6QY.

The club is open to players of all standards; whether you are interested in playing competitive chess or just the occasional friendly games.

New players are very welcome to just turn up on the night but if you contact one of the club members through the website we can explain what is happening on the night you have in mind, and arrange for someone to greet you on your arrival.

For more details visit our website at http://barrychessclub.yolasite.com.

PHIL JONES

For the latest sports stories and breaking news... glamorgan-gem.co.uk We welcome your sports reports, news and other items of interest - email us at: gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

Skiing honours for schoolgirl

AIMEE SMITH, a year-9 pupil at Cowbridge Comprehensive School, has been selected to train with Dragons ski team (Cardiff) in Champéry, Switzerland.

She will then have the opportunity to compete in the Welsh Alpine Championships during the week of January 21 – 28, representing Wales against competitors from elsewhere in the UK and Europe.

Under-14s' outstanding performance

THE score was 33-7 when Cowbridge RFC under-14s met Morriston last October at Morriston, with Cowbridge on the receiving end of a comprehensive stuffing by the unbeaten Swansea outfit.

In the visitors mind, they may have assumed they would be on for a repeat performance – how wrong they were.

Right from the kick off, Cowbridge ran the ball straight back with both sets of backs and forwards interplaying with solid direct running and deft offloads.

From a well positioned scrum just on the halfway, right wing Jakob Thiesen at pace, coming in between the scrum and outside half, took a perfectly weighted pass from scrum half Jack Riley and proceeded to side step and jink his way past four defenders.

He was still sidestepping when he was over the line, with the crowd urging him to touch the ball down – which he did, to give Cowbridge the perfect start and leave Morriston in no doubt they were now in a game.

Unfortunately, shortly after Cowbridge failed to clear their lines (the kicked ball holding up in the wind) the ball was gathered by Morriston with one of their backs running in a good try, close to the posts. The conversion was however, wide.

Further Cowbridge attack saw Morgan Thomas, Kofi Jones, Carwyn Harris and Iestyn Pithers running good lines, and cutting through the visitors' defence.

Within minutes, Cowbridge were back on the offensive, chasing down loose balls, and gaining a maul on the visitors 22. From here, the forward pressure caused the scrambling defence to fumble the ball which Will Clarke picked up, and drove strongly from 15 metres out, carrying two would be tacklers over the line to score. 10-5 to Cowbridge and half time shortly followed.

The second half was 35 minutes of solid defence by the home side. The visitors ran time and time again against Cowbridge and a score looked almost inevitable. It was nerve jangling but thrilling to watch.

During this period, all 15 of the home team made tackle after tackle and on two occasions, Morriston players crossed over the line, but were held-up by Ioan Davies and Luke Gregory.

On another occasion, a last gasp tackle by Carwyn Jones saved a certain try, when the attacker fumbled the ball, again, within two metres of the try line.

After this incident, there was a flare-up where members of both teams squared up to each other.

This, if anything, galvanised Cowbridge, with forwards such as Max Hall, Lucas Reid, Louis Decaux and skipper David Harris again running the ball and making hard, but invaluable yards.

During this period, the line speed of the Cowbridge backs in defence was impressive. On each occasion they were quick off the mark to nullify Morriston's attack.

On a couple of occasions, Cowbridge were able to kick and chase downfield and momentarily relieve the pressure, but essentially they spent most of the second half in their own 50 metres on defence duties.

With the last play of the match, it again looked a certainty that Morriston would score. Their big No 8 charged at Elis Greenwood (the smallest Cowbridge player on the pitch).

Elis did enough to slow the player down, and desperate corner flagging saw two tacklers haul him in to touch, just short of the line. The final whistle below. There was palpable relief and ecstasy!

This was one of the best games the under-14s have produced in a long time, and a perfect example of how to take a lead, defend it, and close out a game.

It was clearly evident in the last quarter that extra fitness sessions in the gym with specialist coach Ollie Trotman, paid dividends, as the Cowbridge players were far more mobile than their tiring opposition, and were able to cover the pitch and corner flag when needed.

The defensive tackling was, at times, text book, and again, due to the hard work the coaches have been putting in with the lads over the season.

Morriston have only lost twice in 13 games before this fixture, and had fielded a full-strength side. This really puts in to context, what a superb win it was for the under-14s.

Coaches and parents alike bristled with pride. Well done the under-14s – you are going from strength to strength, it was a proud parent day, and a victory that will be long remembered.

TD

Seniors make charitable donation

PICTURED above is current Cottrell Park Golf Club senior's society captain Les Fair (left) presenting his cheque to Laura Morgan, PA to chair and director of fundraising support, at Noah's Ark Children's Hospital Charity.

Each senior's captain has his own charity and members contribute throughout the year.

Wales Rugby League achieves two major awards

WALES Rugby League has achieved two major awards as it continues to build and improve the organisation.

The national governing body has been awarded the Level 3 Safeguarding Standard, as well as being awarded the highest grading in the Sport Wales Self Assurance process for the fourth year in a row.

The Safeguarding Standard was awarded jointly by Sport Wales and the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit. In gaining the Level 3 Standard, Wales Rugby League successfully presented to the panel and submitted evidence relating to 30 separate safeguarding criteria.

National Development manager Idris Evans is delighted that the two organisations have rubber stamped the work undertaken over the last 12 months to improve safety within rugby league in Wales.

He said: "We have worked very hard over the last 12 to 18 months to get where we are now - writing new and re-writing old policies, up-skilling staff and volunteers and sharing information with clubs so that children and young people can feel safe playing the sport of rugby league in Wales.

"We have had some great support from our team of safeguarding volunteers across Wales in Martin Roddy, Mark Jones and Mark Parry as well as the support from the Board through Chris Thair.

"To date, we are one of only a handful of sports in Wales to pass the Level 3 Standards and are ensuring we provide an environment where young players can feel safe, protected and listened to. It's about having the right resources in place to make people feel safe, but also being able to have procedures and practices ready if things do go wrong.

"We'd also like to thank the NSPCC and Sport Wales for their support in gaining this standard."

Anne Tiivas, the director of the Child Protection Sports Unit, said: "We would like to congratulate Wales Rugby League on achieving Level 3 of the Safeguarding Standards. We thank the organisation for your contribution to creating a safe environment for children and young people that works towards the framework for safeguarding and protecting children in and through sport in Wales."

The self-assurance process is undertaken annually by all the main sport's National Governing Bodies in the UK. Each NGB must upload evidence and explain how it meets 62 separate criteria on governance, financial management, human resources, policy, risk management and strategy.

The results of which show the Sports Councils whether the NGB is fit for purpose and safe enough to receive lottery and public funding. For the last four years, Wales Rugby League has received the highest grading of green.

Wales Rugby League CEO, Chris Thair, said: "Receiving awards and recognition from three separate bodies in the same month is testament to the fantastic work taking place within Wales. This journey is far from complete and there remains much work to be done but it does show we are on the right road.

"The self-assurance grading just reinforces our own beliefs. We have good governance, are led well, have small financial reserves alongside good financial management and a clear direction of travel. Most importantly we have some good people involved who will ensure this will continue into the future.

"The advanced safeguarding standard from the NSPCC means Wales Rugby League cover the two main aspects of safeguarding in a good manner. We are proactive to prevent issues taking place in the first place however will react in the most suitable way when required. The award shows rugby league in Wales is a good environment for children to be involved in.

"We wish to dedicate the Level 3 safeguarding award to ex-WRL board member Martin Roddy whose health is sadly suffering at the moment. Martin has been the long-time stalwart of safeguarding within our organisation and the main instigator in ensuring it is of the highest priority. We are extremely grateful.

"Finally, to hear John Kear say at a recent meeting and subsequently in a public interview with Sky Sports that Wales Rugby League is the best organisation he has been involved in speaks volumes for our culture and practices.

"As he stated, we are not a cash rich organisation and have much lower revenues than all the other nations and clubs John has coached in the past. These comments reflect how we always try to do things in the right way. with good values and practice; are supportive as a board and is a wonderful reflection upon the staff and players involved in the national team.

"They are a special bunch of people who will rightly go into 2017 Rugby League World Cup with a great deal of pride."

Wales Rugby League still have some remaining shirt sponsors for the World Cup and if by reading this, your business would like to hear more, then please email Chris Thair on chris.thair@walesrugbyleague.co.uk.

IG

PENARTH HOCKEY CLUB ROUND-UP

PENARTH Hockey Club began the second half of the 2016-17 GoCrea8 League campaign in emphatic fashion with two important wins in the push for end-of-season promotion.

PENARTH 6, WEST WILTS 0

Fresh from the winter break Penarth kicked off the business half of the season with a home tie against West Wilts, looking to pick up from some fine pre-Christmas form that saw them move back into promotion contention.

Penarth looked the stronger team in the opening exchanges but struggled to find their rhythm or passing range with the low winter sun shining directly into their faces.

However, it was Penarth's quality that finally shone through as they broke the deadlock midway through the first half.

Captain Tom Haran took a sideline hit on halfway, passing down the line to Chris Baker who, having found himself in space on the base line, drove infield, committing the defence before slipping the ball to Tim Urlings at the back post to sweep home and continue his fine scoring run into 2017.

Penarth were now fully in control of the game and West Wilts, struggling to contain their opponents, deployed a half court press in an effort to stifle the home team's attacks.

The Bears remained undeterred and patient in possession, however, and switching the ball around the back would eventually present another opening as some fine build-up play found Laith El Khatib in the 'D' to smash home on his reverse and give Penarth a 2-0 lead at half-time.

After the break, and with the sun now out of their eyes, Penarth began to move to ball around with much more authority. With one crisp passing move working the ball into the 'D' and onto a West Wilts foot, the Bears ruthlessly dispatched the resulting short corner, Andy Willemite tipping in a Ben Croxall push pass at the back post to give the home team a commanding 3-0 lead.

With West Wilts resistance fading, the Bears went for the kill, smashing in another three to match their 6-0 victory in their opening day encounter.

Haran set up the fourth, reading a defensive clearance to step in front of his man and intercept the ball, before working his way to the baseline and firing the ball across goal to David Joyce, who had stolen half a yard on his marker and made no mistakes sweeping home.

Now pressing the visitors aggressively, it was Croxall's turn to intercept another failed clearance and smash his first reverse stick goal of the year high into the net.

Penarth would save the best until last however. Croxall, pulling the strings in midfield, sent a long cross-field aerial from the halfway line to find Willemite on the far right baseline.

The forward expertly controlled the ball with his first touch, before smashing it to the back post with his second, all in time for the arriving Joyce to sweep home his second – a goal which even draw applause from gracious opponents.

Penarth had plenty to be pleased about, with a good all-round performance, another clean sheet and news arriving of Firebrands' defeat, a result which moves the Vale side up into second place – and among the promotion places – in Conference North.

CARDIFF & MET F 2, PENARTH A 3

Penarth's second XI resumed their De Cymru 1 campaign away to old rivals Cardiff and Met 'F' and, having lost the opening day fixture between the sides, were well aware that this was going to be a difficult afternoon in what was a 'must win' game for the Bears' promotion hopes.

A quick start has been a regular occurrence for Penarth this season so it was surprising that they came out of the blocks slowly on this occasion. Cardiff were able to gain the upper hand and create several good chances which required some excellent saves by Simon Comfort, playing against his former club, to keep the game level.

Having survived the shaky start, however, Penarth found their feet and slowly changed the momentum of the game, gaining the ascendancy and settling into their game plan. Unlike their hosts, the Bears were also able to capitalise on their dominance and grabbed the first goal when a good move down the right wing saw Richard Baker smash in a cross which was dispatched by Phil Lane.

Penarth thought they had doubled their lead soon after, with James Kidby flicking in from the top of the 'D'. However, as the ball was on its way goalwards, the whistle was blown to give Penarth a penalty corner, which went unconverted.

The Vale side didn't have to wait too long for a second goal though, with Chris McCarthy ghosting in behind the Cardiff defence to slap home a through ball from Dave Stevens.

Although Penarth were on top, the experienced Cardiff side always looked dangerous and grabbed a goal back on the break. This only spurred the Bears on, however, and as they kept attacking, the two-goal lead was soon restored. This time, McCarthy turned provider to set up Tom Parkinson at the back post, the winger making a hard finish look very easy as he reacted to a deflection on the pass.

Penarth could and should have had a fourth before the break, as they passed the ball around quickly and confidently, arguably playing their best hockey of the season. However, ultimately failing to convert their chances kept Cardiff in the game despite the 3-1 interval scoreline.

The resumption saw a more organised home team take the field and, as they gained dominance over much of the half, Penarth were limited to counter attacks and became increasingly guilty of turning the ball over too quickly.

This put a lot of pressure on the Bears' rearguard, but the back four and defensive midfielder Andy Strong rebuffed the majority of attacks and, when the defences were breached, Simon Comfort remained in inspired form to keep the two-goal cushion until the last five minutes, when Cardiff grabbed a second to set up a tense end to the game.

The Bears dug deep to see the final moments, however, and gained a very valuable three points, made all the more important as second-placed Bridgend had lost earlier in the day, allowing Penarth to close back in on the promotion places ahead of their meeting with Whitchurch this weekend.

Penarth Hockey Club always welcomes new, old and returning players, umpires, supporters, friends and helpers regardless of age and ability. When the regular season resumes, training will take place on Wednesdays at Stanwell School, with the juniors on the pitch between 6.15pm and 7.15pm and the seniors between 7pm and 8.15pm.

Anyone interested in joining the club at senior or youth level can contactclub secretary Dave Stevens (d_stevens81@hotmail.co.uk) for further information.

CL

Barry warm up for final with 3-1 win over Monmouth

LAST Saturday's Welsh League Division One programme saw Barry Town United fan favourite TJ Nagi make his 150th appearance for the club, a period in which the dynamic striker has scored on some 82 occasions.

Picture by Same Old Smith Photography and Video.

However, the fixture against Monmouth Town was particularly notable for another of Barry's forwards finding form, as striker James Dixon claimed a fine hat-trick in his team's 3-1 victory.

After Dixon had propelled the Town into a one goal lead with only a minute played, the marksman would seal another valuable three points with secondhalf brace, before a deflected effort gifted the Kingfishers a late consolation.

This result helped Barry into second in Welsh League Division One and Dixon, who had netted another three against Haverfordwest County in the Nathaniel MG Cup quarter-finals, will no doubt be dreaming of his own hat-trick of hat-tricks in Saturday's Nathaniel MG Cup final against The New Saints.

The New Saints arrive in Cardiff with a wealth of accomplished talent at their disposal, including Scottish international defender Steve Saunders and forward Alex Darlington, who netted twice for the club in their UEFA Europa League tie with Denmark's FC Midtjylland in the UEFA Europa League.

Nevertheless, in the likes of Nagi, Dixon, Cotterill, Fahiya and others, Barry have a host of players with the ability to make things happen, with manager Gavin Chesterfield also bringing in a number of new defensive options since last season's 5-2 Welsh Cup defeat.

Whatever the outcome this Saturday, Barry have excelled this season to reach the Nathaniel MG showpiece, eliminating two of the Welsh Premier League's top six sides on the way and recovering to win another gruelling tie in extra-time.

That being said, the chance to capture national silverware for the first time in over a decade has never been closer for the former four-time winners. After years of endeavour to return to this stage, can Barry bring the cup home?

Tickets for Barry vs TNS in the Nathaniel MG Cup final are £7 (adults) and £3 (concessions), with admission on the gate until capacity.

AC

Barry and District Ladies Skittle League

THE latest results for the Barry and District Ladies Skittle League for week commencing January 2 are as follows:

First division: Special Angels (R Niblett 24) 233, SV Gals (C Gaffney 31) 255; Barry Stars (A Morgan 30) 318, Pila Palas (M Jones, D O'Sullivan 33) 329; Coppers (S Ford 39) 359, Family and Friends (H Provis, G Loveless 29) 305; Colcot Ladies (B Wilkins, A Singleton 24) 242, Bakers Dozen (M Western 32) 282; Cigar Ladies (C Simmons 32) 293, Space Finders (C Cusheo 28) 303; Bobby's Girls (N Toogood 29) 257, Family Affair (J Davies 30) 268.

Second division: Witchill Widows (A Doel-Davis 29) 293, Roller Coasters (S Thomas 30) 306; Rhoose Starlights (A White 29) 265, Cad Con Fillies (T Clements 30) 262; Airways Angels (E Lewis 28) 252, After Eights (D Goddard 23) 165; Merry Makers (R Collins, C Edwards 23) 159, Breakaways (Z Kenny 26) 211; Castaways (J Tobin G Drew 29) 288, Fallen Angels (K McInery, O Barclay 29) 293.

Third division: Westenders (B Goddard 26) 236, Little Devils (L Bowsher 27) 241; Challengers (L Morgan 29) 259; Vixens (M Marks 30) 274; Uptown Girls (J Marsh 23) 232, Rebels (D Sully, C Carter 26) 200; S V Ladies (S Holden 30) 283, Rugby Triers (S Watts 31) 297; Twilights (S Davis 27) 180, Hill Billies (D Stewart 27) 234; Etcetera (C Mackintosh, J Barton 24) 227; La Belles (E Cordy, L Hughes 26) 253; Dolly Mixtures (G Burdge 21) 182, Witches (Y Curnom 25) 170.

Fourth division: Living on a Spare (D Davies 33) 319, Nite Outers (F Glanville 28) 230; Socialites (R Hooper, J Fumis 25) 221, Off The Rails (S Crump 23) 205; Odd Bods (V Jackson 27) 188, Liberals (G Shier 26) 200; Hell Raisers (J Corrigan 26) 224, Witchill Wanderers (C Morrisey 25) 121.

Tim lands 50-1 winner

***POINT OF PRINCIPAL*, a four-year-old bay gelding trained by Aberthin's Tim Vaughan, was a 50-1 winner of the Betfred TV Newcomers Standard Open National Hunt Flat Race at Warwick last Saturday.**

Well ridden by Alan Johns, who has been making a name for himself of late, Point Of Principal, who, like his 15 rivals, was seeing a racecourse for the first time, finished a length ahead of Paisley Park and those lucky punters who backed him on the tote were rewarded with odds of almost 65-1.

***TOBEFAIR'S* SIX-TIMER**

Debra Hamer, who hails from the Vale and who trains in west Wales, had one of her biggest successes to-date when earlier in the afternoon her seven-year-old brown gelding *ToBeFair* landed the £12,512 Pertemps Network Handicap Hurdle over three miles and two furlongs at odds of 9-1.

ToBeFair, partnered by Trevor Whelan who was riding his first winner since last November, was winning for the sixth time on the bounce and has now chalked up wins at Worcester and Chepstow on two occasions, once at Ffos Las and now Warwick.

Debra's husband Paul is a former Welsh champion point-to-point rider.

DOUBLE FOR EVAN DAVID

Llanharan's Evan David was in good form at the Dunstan Harriers Hunt Point-To-Point Steeplechases at Ampton last Sunday.

He landed the opening East Anglian Area Club Members race on *Abbey Lane* (evens) and 40 minutes or so later took the first division of the Open Maiden race on *Tailspin* (5-1) to complete a 12-1 double for trainer Andrew Pennock.

Evan came in for plenty of cheers when *Tailspin* got home by a neck from *Pettistree*.

In the mixed open race Roger Willcox's Lauberhorn finished third behind *Arkrose* and *Trafficer*.

You can e-mail your news and views to brianlee4@virginmedia.com.

BRIAN LEE

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On-form Barry ladies beat Penybont

TOP of the table Barry Town United Ladies looked to continue their recent excellent league form with a tough fixture away to third placed Penybont.

Both sides went into the game with only one defeat this season setting up an anticipated mouth-watering clash with both sides aiming for promotion.

Barry started the brighter of the two teams, creating a few half chances but nothing that came to fruition. It took until the 20th minute before the away side opened up their account in this tight contest. Tracey White went on a driving run through the midfield before laying of a pass to in-form Naomi Coulson who scored another fantastic goal from outside the box with a left footed shot that rocketed into the far corner. Barry 1-0 up and good value for their lead.

The goal did spark a reaction from the home side as they started to exert themselves on the game, however Barry still looked in control until a mistake proved costly.

Against the run of play, Barry gave possession away in defence allowing the Penybont striker to race through and place the ball past Barry goalkeeper Megan Davies for the equaliser.

A setback for the league leaders and the home side were duly lifted. However Barry composed themselves and just before half-time, a lovely move starting right from the back resulted in the visitors taking the lead for the second time in the match.

White again the dominant midfielder controlling the game put a lovely ball through for Stacey Ayling who found goal machine Luca Laky who tapped the ball home to give Barry a 2-1 lead at the break.

As the game progressed, Barry had the lion's share of possession but they could not covert a number of chances to put the game to bed.

Both the post and the crossbar were struck whilst the Penybont keeper was having a fine game. The home side failed to register a noteworthy effort in the second half meaning Barry held on to record a deserved and well-fought 2-1 away victory that keeps them top of the league for now.

The defensive unit of Meg Davies, Emma Thompson, Meg Bailey and Emily Mortimore were again outstanding with Barry only conceding nine goals in nine league games so far this season.

Captain Stevie Cook was again a calming influence on the squad and the ladies will now be looking to maintain their league title challenge with an away trip to Cascade this weekend.

Squad: 1. Megan Davies, 2. Emma Thompson, 3. Ellie Drew, 4. Tracey White, 5. Emily Mortimore, 6. Meg Bailey, 7. Naomi Coulson, 8. Stevie Cook (c), 9. Luca Laky, 10. Stacey Ayling, 11. Ffion Thomas, 12. Emily Hill, 14. Hannah Moger, 15. Georgia Peplow.

LW

THE WALES SIX NATIONS 2017 SQUAD CONTAINS 'A FLAVOUR OF FRESHNESS'

STAND-IN head coach Robert Howley has unveiled a 36-strong Welsh squad for the upcoming Six Nations with a mix of familiar and not so familiar faces – including "a flavour of freshness" – with seven uncapped players getting a call-up.

"They are deserving of their opportunity and it will be exciting to see how they perform in the international set-up," an ebullient Howley told the waiting media on Tuesday.

"It is shaping up for another great Six Nations. We have the all-important carrot of Rugby World Cup seedings on the horizon, post-tournament, and that is an important target for us – especially as we welcome the world's Number 2 (*England*) and Number 4 (*Ireland*) ranked sides to the Principality Stadium over the coming months."

The newcomers include promising Wasps' open side Thomas Young (son of Dai) and Leicester's highly-rated pivot Owen Williams – making his long overdue arrival on the international scene.

On Owen Williams, Howley said: "He has been dogged with a few injuries that have kept him out. We have only picked three centres. With both Dan (Biggar) and Sam (Davies) in the squad, we need competition for places. I was impressed with Owen in the Munster game and the resilience he has shown. He has a slight injury at the moment, but, hopefully, he'll be available to play this weekend."

With skipper Sam Warburton having stepped down from the role, Howley went on: "It's an honour to select Alun Wyn Jones as captain. His vast experience as a player and a leader will help drive this squad forward and I believe he will flourish in the role.

"Sam has led Wales more times than any other captain and had great success in the role; however, we want him to concentrate on his game and be the best player he can be.

"We had conversations during and since the autumn with Sam; no player is guaranteed their place in an international team and we want Sam to be playing his very best rugby and he agrees this is the best way forward."

WALES SIX NATIONS SQUAD:

FORWARDS: Scott Andrews (Cardiff Blues), Nicky Smith (Ospreys), Rob Evans (Scarlets), Rhodri Jones (Ospreys), Tomas Francis (Exeter Chiefs), Samson Lee (Scarlets), Kristian Dacey (Cardiff Blues), Ken Owens (Scarlets), Scott Baldwin (Ospreys), Jake Ball (Scarlets), Alun Wyn Jones (Ospreys), Rory Thornton (Ospreys), Luke Charteris (Bath Rugby), Cory Hill (Newport Gwent Dragons), James King (Ospreys), Justin Tipuric (Ospreys), Olly Cracknell (Ospreys), Ross Moriarty (Gloucester Rugby), Taulupe Faletau (Bath Rugby), Sam Warburton (Cardiff Blues), Thomas Young (Wasps).

BACKS: Gareth Davies (Scarlets), Rhys Webb (Ospreys), Aled Davies (Scarlets), Dan Biggar (Ospreys), Sam Davies (Ospreys), Owen Williams (Leicester Tigers), Jamie Roberts (Harlequins), Jonathan Davies (Scarlets), Scott Williams (Scarlets), Ashton Hewitt (Newport Gwent Dragons), Alex Cuthbert (Cardiff Blues), Steffan Evans (Scarlets), George North (Northampton Saints), Liam Williams (Scarlets) Leigh Halfpenny (Toulon).

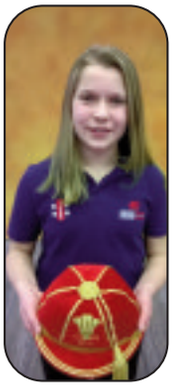
Wales kick off their Six Nations campaign aganst Italy in Rome on Sunday, February 5 at 3pm and the eventual shape of that team emerging from tbe bumper squad will be closely studied for signs of the promised 'change of direction'. **Don John**

WALES HONOURS FOR SIAN AND ALYS!

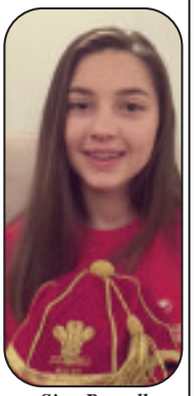
COWBRIDGE Cricket Club is celebrating after two junior cricketers were awarded Wales caps for the forthcoming season.

Sian Russell has been selected for the Wales under-15 girls squad and Alys Philips for the Wales under-13 girls squad. Sian has also been selected for the elite performance programme.

Both girls, from Ystradowen, attend Cowbridge Comprehensive. This is a tremendous achievement and the club wishes both of them every success for the season. **SR**



Alys Phillips



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Vale Schools hold on against Pontypridd

DESPITE the Met Office warnings of the end of days, Saturday saw the Vale on the road again, all be it only as far as Sardis Road for their Dewar Shield tie with Pontypridd Schools.

With the rain teeming down, the Vale kicked off attacking the clubhouse end. After a fairly even start the Vale took the lead through a Benji Williams try after a midfield break from captain Evan Lloyd.

He popped the ball to Williams who crashed over in the corner for the try. Unfortunately there was no conversion from Jamie Howells, the ball bouncing the wrong way on the bar.

Pontypridd hit back, launching attack after attack at the Vale line, but some great tackles from Will Tuckwell, Morgan Veness and Tristan Thomas, and some lovely clearance kicks from Tom Ap John, stemmed the tide.

Aggressive counter rucking from the Vale wing forwards Lewys Williams and Iestyn Galton helped the Vale regain the upper hand, and good work at the base of the ruck from scrum half Will O'Connor allowed the Vale to bring their back line into the game,.

Darting runs from Griff Naylor and the powerful runs of Dan Stancombe took the game back into the Ponty half.

The Vale's second try was an absolute beauty. A lovely break from inside his own half saw Jamie Howells dance through the Ponty midfield. He passed to winger Jake Thomas who raced down the right of the field, weaving in and out of the Ponty defence only to be held up by a desperate tackle five metres from the opposition try line.

He popped the ball to Iestyn Galton who swiftly passed to Dan Stancombe, who turned and passed to Griff Naylor, running a lovely line that cut through the final defenders, to score in the left hand corner.

Howells added the extra points, the ball soaring between the posts, making the halftime score Vale 12, Pontypridd 0.

The second half saw the Vale under the cosh for large periods, Pontypridd in general having the better of the game.

The Vale's defence was superb, however, as was their scrum, who continually drove back the bigger Ponty pack, with Evan Lloyd and Jarred Williams working hard in the second row.

Both wingers had a good game, Rhys Gentiles tearing down his wing on a number of occasions before being injured, while his replacement Ed Thomas did well, tackling hard.

As the game drew on, Pontypridd's never-say-die attitude paid off and they crossed the line by the posts. Luckily for the Vale, the rushed conversion kick was missed.

The final few minutes of the game saw the Vales defence tested again and again as Ponty attacked, but the final score stayed Vale 12, Pontypridd 5.

The Vale's next game is home at Canton RFC against unbeaten Pembrokeshire schools; follow us on Twitter @ValeSchoolsU15, for kick-off time.

As always our thanks to our sponsors, Apricot Online learning, and to the coaches and parents. **MV**

Action from Vale Schools' game against Pontypridd at Sardis Road.

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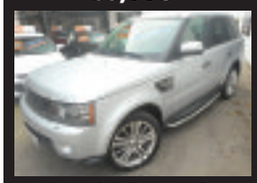

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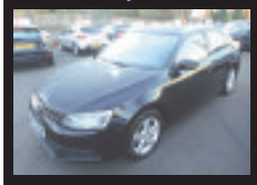

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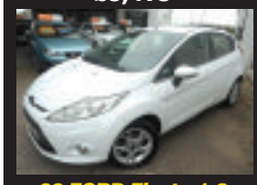

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Ath youth celebrate anniversary with fine win

The two teams before kick off. Photo by John Canon.

BRIDGEND ATHLETIC are celebrating the 40th anniversary of the formation of a youth team, and to celebrate this event Bridgend Athletic held a friendly fixture against a Bridgend District representative XV with players selected from a number of local clubs.

The Athletic would like to thank Rob McGee for his assistance in setting up this fixture and also the District coaches for preparing their players and organizing the team.

From the kick off this game was going to be competitive. The District team, chosen from top clubs in the Ospreys League Division A, attacked the Ath defence with determination.

The Ath held the onslaught in their 22 metre area - the District forwards in the loose maul were pushing for the try line, but the Ath held them at bay which won the turn over.

A pass from fullback Sam Richards to Stuart Floyd-Ellis saw the centre sprinting towards the District try line and in spectacular fashion scored the first try of the game. The conversion from the touch line failed.

Not to be outdone the District team regrouped and again attacked the Ath defence looking to equalize. From a scrum in the Ath 22 they were penalized for infringing and the District sides full back Callum Powell made no mistake to slot the ball over the crossbar.

From a set scrum in the District's 22 came the Ath's second try; they pushed for the try line and it was left to No. 8 Cameron Thomas to score.

Some great kicking by the District's full back Callum Powell and their outside half Drew Price were putting pressure on the Ath defence.

From a loose maul Cameron Thomas fed the ball to

Dan James and from him a pass to Jon Taylor eventually found winger Tom James who scored in the corner to make the score 15-3 at half-time.

From the restart, both teams used their replacements

to their advantage and it was the Ath that took made the most of the advantage of fresh players and from a loose maul a pass from Stuart Floyd-Ellis saw left wing Joe Patterson outrunning the defence to make the score 20-3.

The Athletics fifth try saw Jon Taylor receiving the ball in his own 22 and sprinting down the left, outrunning the district players, then cutting inside to score a spectacular try close to the uprights, making it easy for fullback Sam Richards to convert, taking the score to 27-3.

Late in the game, pressure and good passing of the ball saw the District's No.8 cross the line for a consolation try.

All in all this was a great game played with determination by both sides, watched by a large crowd of supporters from both teams.

JC

Porthcawl whitewash Bryncethin... *BUT FEEL DISAPPOINTED!*

ON a day when the division threw up a number of low-scoring matches, the result at South Road was no different, as Porthcawl took the double over their near neighbours Bryncethin to extend their lead at the top of the division, winning 12-0.

The weather was biting cold and interspersed with heavy showers, with the home side finding the going difficult against a revitalised Bryncethin outfit which kept going until the end.

With the whistle sounding irritatingly regularly for both sides as they fought an honest physical confrontation, little wonder that tempers boiled over at times.

It was fully 25 minutes into the first half before the Seaweeds opened the scoring, following an embarrassing amount of possession.

With skipper Richard Hnyda leading the way with his best match of the campaign, Porthcawl's pack applied the pressure as prop Tim Lunn latched onto a close pass from scrum half Ross Parsons and rampaged his way into the visitors' 22.

As the ruck was won and the ball moved out towards the left touchline with the Bryncethin defence stretched, hooker Jack Williams finished it all off with a fine unconverted try as he drove in low at the corner.

Despite continuing to garner plentiful possession from both scrum and line, Porthcawl could not extend that lead before the break which ended at 5-0.

As one learned rugby man observed at the break, the home side were often undone by trying too hard and forcing play when greater control and patience might well have yielded a better return on the mountain of ball used.

The second half saw a continuation of the first half, with Porthcawl doing their best to rack up the points but Bryncethin were having none of it and at times looked dangerous themselves and displaying unfailing commitment.

With the introduction of returning flanker James Burge-Davies off the bench with 30 minutes remaining, there transpired a more direct approach from the home side as Davies' forceful ball-carrying up the middle on a number of occasions, helped peg the visitors back into their half and fighting the mounting home pressure.

As the home pack put together a number of forward surges, recycling the ball with aplomb, Parsons went blind and fed wing Rob Gubb at speed.

As he got into his not inconsiderable stride, Gubb, when faced with a wall of defenders, produced a piston-packed hand-off to break through before taking three defenders over with him as he grabbed the vital try right at the corner.

Josh White's magnificent conversion right off the touchline ensured that the visitors would now need two scores.

As the match entered its final minutes however, neither side could make any meaningful headway as tempers frayed and several dust-ups used up much of the time.

It was not a great result in terms of points scored for Porthcawl with bonus points wholly elusive but a vital win nevertheless.

However, with both improved Banwen then Baglan visiting South Road, and a tough visit to Crynant, before the Six Nations break, Porthcawl will need to be much more clinical with their possession.

PF

Bulls pull off last-minute friendly win

A last minute try from Tom Ansen gave Bridgend Blue Bulls a 28-24 win in a thrilling pre-season friendly against a South East Wales Student select at Pyle RFC on Sunday.

Played on a cold muddy surface, it will be an entirely different scenario for the Bulls when they take on London Chargers on a 4G pitch in the Challenge Cup on January 28, but this game will have helped their players shake off a few cobwebs and challenge themselves against students who are the middle of their playing season.

An error in the Bulls defence gave the Students the lead on 15 minutes with Kyle Garnett running over from following a scrum. Daf Green converted.

However, Bridgend went into half-time 14-6 to the good after three well-worked tries. First, on 20 minutes, Nathan Hawkins ran over after a good passing move. Gareth Howells missed the kick.

A little over 10 minutes after that, Thomas Pascoe was in at the corner to give Bridgend an 8-4 lead. Again Howells failed to convert.

Just before the interval, Josh Dixon, who had just on as a substitute, ran over for Bridgend's third which Hawkins improved.

The Students again drew first blood in the second half with Callum Jenkins going in under the sticks and Green converting to put the scores back to 14-12.

But five minutes after that, Dale Woods made a strong run, with defenders crashing off him and were unable to prevent him scoring in the corner.

The try went unconverted and the Students levelled on the hour with George James scoring and once again making it easy for Green to convert as he was just left of the posts.

The scores were level at 18-18 for under three minutes. Scott Walker dived through a crowd of players to give Bulls the lead back with Joe Symons converting.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

Second straight win for Ath seconds

BRIDGEND ATHLETIC second XV made it a happy new year with their second successive victory.

Following the previous week's win against Nantyfyllon they defeated close neighbours Tondu 22-13 in a Mid Glamorgan Premier League fixture.

The first half was a tight affair. The only try of the half was scored wide out by Athletic prop Wayne Fooks, while a Tondu penalty saw the score 5-3 in favour of the Athletic at the break.

Strong Athletic scrummaging by the front row of Lewis Dando, Nathan Holman and Wayne Fooks forced Tondu to concede a penalty try converted by outside half Scott Jones. He then added a penalty to increase the Athletic lead.

Tondu responded with a converted try and penalty. The game was secured for the Athletic when turnover ball was moved quickly for Rory Thomas to cross for the third Athletic try which Jones again converted.

Nathan Holman, Ben Cording and Harry Griffiths stood out in the Athletic pack, while scrum half Mark Minchinton and an impressive defence from centre Hywel Roberts saw them shine in the back division.

AB

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